

Bridging the Gap

Making Space Fundraising Impact Report 2024-25



Welcome from our CEO

Dear Supporters,

In what has been a challenging financial year, we are proud to report that our fundraising activity at Making Space has remained strong and resilient. Despite the cost-of-living crisis, reduced community service capacity, and wider uncertainty in the sector, we have worked hard to stabilise voluntary income through innovative initiatives, strategic partnerships, and a deep commitment to our values.

For every £1 invested in fundraising, we have returned £2.40 in additional income – a testament to the creativity, dedication, and resourcefulness of our team. While grant and legacy income were lower than anticipated, individual and community giving more than doubled expectations – a particularly heartening outcome, driven by the commitment of our supporters and the participatory nature of this kind of giving.

We secured 45 grants totalling £175,800, supporting community activities, pilot projects, and vital cost-of-living initiatives. We also strengthened our digital fundraising infrastructure, embedded contactless giving across events, and launched new campaigns to enhance engagement. Corporate partnerships saw steady growth, and we laid the foundations for longer-term collaborations, including workplace wellbeing offers and local sponsorships.

Importantly, fundraising at Making Space is about more than income. It drives innovation, supports new service models, and brings real social value to the people we support. It enhances engagement across our community and raises the charity's profile at a time when connection, visibility, and trust are more important than ever.





With heartfelt thanks

None of this would be possible without the incredible generosity and support of our donors, the commitment of our volunteers, the engagement of our corporate sponsors, and the strength of our community partners. Whether you gave your time, resources, or energy, you have helped to make a real and lasting difference to the lives of the people we support.

To every individual who organised or took part in a fundraiser, to the businesses who donated prizes or hosted collections, to those who sponsored awards, and to those who remembered a loved one through an In Memory donation – thank you. Your compassion fuels everything we do.

Your support has sustained us through uncertain times and helped us build a platform for continued impact. As we look ahead, we do so with gratitude, hope, and a renewed commitment to making a difference – together.



About Making Space

Making Space is a national charity supporting adults with care and support needs — including people with mental health conditions, learning disabilities, autism, and dementia — and the unpaid carers who look after them.

Founded in 1982, we work in over 30 local authority areas, supporting between 11,000 and 14,000 people each year. Our services include supported living, care homes, carer support services, day centres, therapy, and numerous activity groups.



Our work is guided by our core values, which guide the way we work, our policies and procedures, and how we interact with each other, partners and the people we support. Embracing these values is what makes us unique and strong.



We work tirelessly to improve the lives of the people we support, enabling them to lead happy, and healthy, independent lives.

In 2024 we surpassed over £1 million in fundraised income over the last five years!

This milestone reflects the unwavering support of our staff, supporters, the community, corporate partners, and individual donors.

The majority of the funds raised have come through grants awarded by community trusts and foundations, bringing additional activities and equipment to our services.

Our organisation has also benefited from partnerships with corporate businesses, which have provided both financial support including sponsorship and in-kind donations. These collaborations have been vital in driving forward key projects and initiatives, allowing us to extend our reach and impact within communities.

Legacy and in-memory donations have also played an important role in helping us raise £1 million, as individuals and families have chosen to leave lasting legacies that help fund our work for years to come. These generous gifts reflect the deep trust that supporters have in our work, our vision and our mission.

In addition to these larger contributions, our services and local communities have shown their hearts through hundreds of grassroots events. From sponsored challenge events, to tombolas, raffles, and other locally run activities, the passion and creativity of volunteers and supporters has been an essential part of our fundraising journey over the last 5 years.

Bob Towers, Fundraising Manager, said: "For a small team we have been punching above our weight both in terms of the income we have been able to generate and the impact that it has on our services and the people we support. We work creatively and have the support of our colleagues in services who tell us of the needs and gaps."

"The £1 million milestone is more than just a financial achievement—it represents the collective effort of our colleagues, the people we support and wider communities who want to make a real difference. Our dedication, combined with the generosity of individuals, businesses, and grant makers, has created a lasting impact that will continue to change lives."

Natalie Bargery, Corporate Fundraising Lead said: "We have brought in so many innovations in the last five years, like the fundraising platform on the website, text giving, contactless giving, QR codes, corporate sponsorships, free Willmaking, challenge events, matched funding. We accessed Covid Emergency grants and cost of living support, every year there is something new and big happening and it's lovely to see this making a huge difference to the lives of the people we support."

As we celebrate this incredible milestone, our fundraising team are looking ahead to the next five years with confidence, believing that together we can achieve even more.



Company giving and corporate partnerships

Working with us will give you and your business the opportunity to make a real difference in the health and social care sector and bring your staff and customers together to help people who really need your support. We do not take any administration fees from donations so more income is spent on direct, frontline support for the people who use our services. Every penny you raise will go the people who need it most.

Each year we host our Colleague Awards Ceremony, which celebrates the successes of our workforce. We want to say a huge thank you to our 2024 corporate partners, who donated £12,000 to Making Space, by sponsoring one of our Colleague Award Categories.

A huge thank you to the below sponsors who each donated £1,000

























"I had a great time at the Colleague Awards, honestly. What you create there at Making Space is fantastic and you all should be proud of yourselves."

Alan Taylor, Business Development Director, Solid State Security Limited. Awards Sponsor at the Colleague Awards 2024.



Why should your company work with Making Space?



Teambuilding opportunities: We can provide a fun programme of fundraising activities that will help build team bonds and boost morale with positive effects on staff output and staff retention.



Greater ability to attract talent and retain staff: Employees are increasingly looking for work that provides them with a sense of purpose and fulfilment.



Brand enhancement/PR: Your Company will be recognised as being socially responsible and genuinely caring.



Improved customer reputation: Many customers don't just prefer to deal with responsible companies, they insist on it.



Drive change/ make a real difference: A partnership with Making Space could help to drive change in the sector and make a real difference to society.



Support your local community: We can ring-fence money raised for local services or causes that you wish to support.



Volunteering opportunities: The chance for staff to provide meaningful support to us through their expertise or skills.



New or improved prospects: To access investment, attract positive media attention and find new business opportunities.

Impact - Digital activities in our Hollymere and Hartley Place Extra Care services, Ellesmere Port

An example of new digital technology that we have employed in services over the last 12 months is The Happiness Programme. The Happiness Programme is an activities service that projects games, quizzes and cognitive challenges on to any surface. The activities include painting pictures, brushing leaves, popping bubbles and playing games. The programme helps to improve general wellbeing by encouraging physical movement, increasing social interaction and a reduction in anxiety and stress. The Happiness Programme has been made possible only through fundraising income.



Primark staff peddle for mental health

Employees at Primark's Stockport store have raised £546.51 for Making Space in a cycle relay challenge. The staff team pulled together to cycle 67km, the distance between Merseyway and the Liverpool ONE store. They used a stationary bike which was set up in-store.

The team raised the money for our Open Door service in Stockport, which offers mental health and wellbeing support to local residents. The service operates just a few minutes' walk from Primark.

Every team member completed a 5km ride during their shift. The fundraiser was one of a series by the Primark team, which has raised a total of £546.51 so far and pledges to continue to raise as much cash as possible for Open Door.

Holly Smith, assistant store manager, said: "We chose to support our neighbour Open Door as we take mental health very seriously at Primark, and we wanted to support a local charity first and foremost.

"We have in-store mental health first aiders as it's an issue very close to our hearts. We didn't have an end target in mind, as we plan to continue staging regular fundraisers to raise as much as we can for Open Door.

"All our colleagues take part and really enjoy the opportunity to do something a little bit different during the working day that raises both awareness and money for people experiencing mental health issues in the area."

Rose-Anne Tracey is a Stockport resident who has previously accessed Open Door. She said of the support she received:

"I can remember the first day I dropped in at Open Door. I didn't want to be here, I didn't want to live, and it was a real struggle at first to ask for help. But the welcome I got from the team at Open Door was like nothing I had experienced before.

"It was wonderful... it felt safe and welcoming. The team was very supportive, friendly and non-judgmental - being there was like feeling free. Open Door has supported me more than any other service.

"I know I would not be here today had it not been for the help they gave me when I was in crisis."

Fiona Marsden, manager at Open Door, said:

"We're incredibly grateful that the team at Primark's Stockport store have chosen us as the recipient of their generosity

and to raise awareness of our service.

"Every penny raised goes directly towards helping Stockport residents who are struggling with their mental health, and allows us to reach even more people who may not know where to turn."



Corporate fundraising support

Cost of Christmas collections

Thank you to the following businesses for hosting our Cost of Christmas collection bins in their premises. Each workplace held a collection throughout December looking to gather gifts and practical items for the people we support.

Many of the people we support wouldn't have received a gift without their support. We know that Christmas is a costly time for everyone and as the cost of living continues to rise, we know that every donation to charity is more valuable. We would like to thank you for your ongoing support over the last 12 months.











Foundations and Trusts

Thanks to the generosity of these foundations and trusts, we were able to support people to live well with dementia, in our Community Division services.

We received a total grant income of £9,583 across the financial year for our Sandalwood Day Centre service.

The centre offers a safe space for up to 16 people with complex dementia to socialise and engage with therapeutic activities. The cost of a full day at Sandalwood is £65 and we use fundraising income, including grants to ensure that we can maintain a quality service without increasing fees.

Thank you to:

David Family Foundation: enabled us to improve activities for people living with Dementia, including providing equipment for Cognitive Stimulation Therapy, Art Therapy and Life Story Work. CST and Art Therapy have been shown to have beneficial effects on cognition and quality of life for people with dementia. Life story work is beneficial for people living with dementia as it allows us to personalise the support we give to match hobbies, interests and experiences.

WG Edwards Foundation: provided 4 heat and massage standing recliner seats for people accessing our centre. By reducing stress, improving sleep, and enhancing mobility, massage chairs can contribute to better overall physical and mental wellbeing, which can indirectly lower the risk of falls.

Your Hearts & Minds Charity Community Grants, East Midlands Airport Community Fund and Toyota Manufacturing UK Charitable Trust: enabled us to fund a Capability Garden Project, trips and activities in our services in Rotherham. Capability gardens, also known as sensory or dementia-friendly gardens, are designed to stimulate various senses and evoke positive memories for people living with dementia. Games, crafts, and outdoor fun can make people living with dementia feel valued, connected, and engaged.





Bridging the gap

Our dedicated Fundraising Team, offer vital support to our smaller services, that continue to go above and beyond to meet the needs of the carers we support, despite the increasing financial challenges we face as a charity. In 2024-2025, we released £20,746 from our unrestricted Fundraising Reserves, to support our services to go the extra mile.



Match Funding May

In May we provided services with £2,884 of match funding, to deliver a range of activities for the people we support, including trips, parties, gardening equipment and pamper sessions. Well done to the services who raised funds and took part in our challenge.

- Burton Head Court
- Castlewood Court
- Kingshill
- Limes Place
- Inspiring Minds

- Waterhouse Court (Wigan)
- Hope Court
- Open Door Stockport
- Calderdale Carers
- Ashwood Court

The remaining £17,862 was shared amongst our community, supported living and registered services and funded everything from summer houses to yoga classes and trips to the zoo.

- Burton Head Court
- Castlewood Court
- Kingshill
- James House, David Street and Mill Court
- Warrington Day Service
- Cheshire east All age carers hub

- Bolton carer Support
- Devonshire Road
- Mount Pleasant
- Calderdale (Silver Lining project)
- Cambridgeshire Carers
- Sherdley Court

Thanks to the generosity of these foundations and trusts, we were able to support carers through times of hardship.

Cheshire East Community Response Fund, Edith Murphy Foundation, Sir James & Lady Scott Trust, Hobson Charity, One Stop Shop Community Partnership/Groundwork, Bolton Household Fund, Calderdale Council Household Support Fund.

We received a total of £35,475 for our Cost of Living/Hardship support in the last financial year.

These funds are invaluable to ensuring that we can meet the needs of carers, to reduce hardship and to make life easier for carers in ways we often take for granted. Using these funds we were able to fund practical items for carers including washing machines, fridges, freezers, bedding, food, support with bills, transport, school uniforms and equipment for young carers, laptops and sim cards.

Bolton Carer's Mental Health Service is commissioned by Bolton Council to provide information, support and signposting unpaid carers who are supporting someone living with a mental health condition. The service provides a holistic person-centred approach to support, which can include the completion of a statutory Carers Assessment, which informs the creation of an individualised Carers' Support Plan. This ensures that carers have the resources and support they need in their caring role to maintain their own health and wellbeing.

In 2024/25, despite facing a deficit budget of £8,446.00, we continued to deliver our essential services to carers across Bolton. Our Fundraising Team secured over £11,000 in grants, to help cover the cost of peer support groups, activities and trips which give carers an essential break from their caring role. The grants have also allowed us to reach our most vulnerable carers to help them to cover utility costs and to purchase essential household good such as microwaves, washing machines and cookers. All of the beneficiaries that received the awards were unpaid carers in the Bolton area, 95% of the carers were over the age of 55.

Thanks to grant providers in the Bolton area, we facilitated 72 peer support groups, supporting 523 carers, and supported an additional 192 new carers referred to the service, an increase of 6% from the previous year.



Fundraising stories

Millie cares for her husband, an ex-naval officer, who was diagnosed with a mental health condition after experiencing suicidal tendencies.

He had developed an alcohol addiction as a coping mechanism. Through accessing our Carers Service, Millie was able to reach the services she needed to support her husband and herself.

We referred Millie's husband to the Darren Deady Foundation, who offer comprehensive support to veterans and their families.

Millie has accessed regular emotional support as well as our grants scheme for essential household goods. Now Millie feels confident to attend our socials and is ready to start building friendships with other carers.

In our Cheshire East All Age Carers Service, we were able to support a carer and her daughter to eat together by providing the funds for her to purchase a dining table and chairs.

The carer was feeding her daughter who is in a wheelchair and was sitting on the sofa, making it impossible to eat at the same time.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, they can feel more connected at meal times.

Support for older people to live independently for longer

Historic England (Everyday Heritage Grant) £5,000.00, Hollymere and Hartley Place.

A year of memories, music, and storytelling came to a joyful conclusion at Hollymere Extra Care's Village Hall, as residents, staff, and special guests gathered to celebrate the culmination of the Port Histories Project.

The celebration marked the end of a year-long project led by Making Space, in partnership with local historian Judith Beastall, and supported by a £10,000 Everyday Heritage grant from Historic England. The initiative engaged older residents at Hollymere and Hartley Place Extra Care schemes in exploring and sharing their personal experiences of Ellesmere Port's rich working-class history.

The event was officially opened by The Mayor of Ellesmere Port, Councillor Paul Donovan, who praised the community spirit, and the proud history captured through the project. Guests enjoyed live entertainment from Derek Herbert, who performed popular wartime songs, and explored a vibrant exhibition showcasing residents' memories through photos, stories, and memorabilia.

Throughout the year, 21 residents took part in 12 themed workshops, covering topics such as "Shops of the Past," "Wartime Memories," and "Changing Times in Ellesmere Port." The sessions sparked lively conversations, reflections, and laughter, reconnecting residents with the town's history and each other.



Residents also enjoyed several trips as part of the project, including visits to The National Waterways Museum, the Sleeping Beauty pantomime at the Civic Hall, and the Black Country Living Museum. A D-Day Commemorative Event and a visit from Oak Community Primary School, where pupils interviewed residents about their memories, added special moments to the year's activities.

Mary Coyle, Service Manager for Hollymere and Hartley Place, reflected on the project:

This project was all about bringing people together to share memories of Ellesmere Port – from school days and family life to work and social events. It gave everyone a chance to reflect on how the town has changed and what that's meant for them. It was a really interactive, local project led by the people we support. With Judith's help, we chose the topics and trips together, and the stories that came out were so personal and powerful. We hope this kind of work continues – it's been truly inspiring.

Valerie, a Hollymere resident who took part, shared:

"I've always enjoyed being involved in community projects, so I was eager to take part. My favourite moments were the trips, both around Ellesmere Port and further afield. They brought back so many memories. The singers at Hollymere made us feel like we were really going back in time. Most importantly, it brought us closer together – the friendships we've formed will last long after this project ends".

Rachel Horton, Regional Head of Operations for Making Space, added: We're incredibly proud of the Port Histories Project and the lasting impact it's had. It brought people together in such a powerful way, sharing stories, building friendships, and reconnecting with the history that shaped their lives. The memories, laughter and sense of community that came out of this project have been truly inspiring for everyone involved.

Although the formal project has ended, its legacy will continue. Exhibition displays will remain at Hollymere and Hartley Place, and plans are underway to embed similar heritage activities into future programmes.

Thank you to Historic England for their generous support in making this special celebration of Ellesmere Port's living history possible.

Thank you to all of the local support we received to help us to develop innovative projects aimed at increasing wellbeing.



Co-op Local Community Fund donated £4,096.79 to our Darlington Extra Care Services, which was used to fund activities that help keep residents active and engaged.



County Durham Community Foundation donated £5,000 for our Hugs in Bags Project in our Darlington Extra Care.



Kirkby United (Merseyside Police) donated £3,000 to enable us to deliver Scam & Mate Crime Workshops to our residents in our Knowsley Supported Housing Service.



B&Q Foundation (Neighbourly) £5,000 for a Summer house at our Bridle Court Supported Housing Service.

Donations in kind - £7,502

Not only do donations of money make a difference to the people we support, but donations of goods and vouchers also make an impact on the people we support. This year we handed out over £7,500 worth of donations from our supporters including ASOS Trainers, 31 Xmas gift bags, gardening equipment, gym memberships, bikes, Easter eggs, cinema tickets, experience vouchers and much more.

Apprenticeship levy donations

Employers can transfer a portion of their unused Apprenticeship Levy funding to other organisations, including charities, via a "levy gifting" or "levy transfer" programme. Making Space has been the beneficiary of such levy donations for a number of years.

This amount has increased steadily over the years and, correspondingly, the amount which we are able invest in our staff apprenticeship training has increased each year.

This is often overlooked as donated income but makes a vital contribution to the work of the charity and the impact on the people we support, by ensuring we can maximise our learning and development budgets, and offer specialist training courses.

	Donated	Saved
2024 - 25	£137,258	£6,863

Making Space employee wins apprenticeship award

Natasha Diallo, who is 46 and lives in Leigh, has recently completed the first year of a Level 2 Diploma in Care at Wigan & Leigh College. The married mother of three says the flexible nature of the apprenticeship meant that she was able to complete the qualification while caring for her family and working night shifts in Making Space supported living services.

And, as well as boosting her career prospects, Natasha's commitment to her apprenticeship has been recognised with an award from the college.

"I've worked with Making Space for three and a half years and I really love my job," says Natasha. "This is my first job as a care and support worker, my last job was in a charity shop. But although caring is something that's always come naturally to me, the apprenticeship has taught me there's so much more to consider when caring for people professionally.

"Everyone is different and it's so important to listen, observe and support people in the way that's best for them. The apprenticeship gives you all this knowledge and, because you're learning as you're working, you can immediately use it to benefit the people you're supporting."

Natasha works with people living with mental health issues, and is on hand throughout the night to help with any problems they may be facing. "Sometimes people come to me because they can't sleep, often it's just simply to chat," says Natasha.

"My work also involves a lot of reporting and auditing – it's very important that when we hand over to the next team, they have all the information they need. The apprenticeship covers all of this, and more."

Despite her busy schedule, Natasha says that the work involved in the apprenticeship doesn't pile on the



pressure. "I think a lot of people still think an apprenticeship involves sitting in a classroom one day a week with school or college leavers," she says.

"Obviously there are tasks and assignments to complete, but you don't have a fixed schedule. I'm not saying it doesn't involve hard work! But all my work is downloaded and then I'll share it with my supervisor and she'll go through it and ask questions to make sure I'm clear about everything I've learned – it's all very thorough. But I can work around my shifts and family time, and my supervisor always makes time to see me to go through my work and help with any issues I may be having."

Natasha also has the full backing of Making Space – in fact, it was her manager who suggested she complete the apprenticeship. "My manager has been amazing," says Natasha. "When I first started work, she really encouraged me and suggested the apprenticeship after I'd completed my Making Space training. I didn't think it would be for me but said I'd give it a shot, and I loved it."

The formal knowledge Natasha has gained through the apprenticeship has not only allowed her to improve the care she provides – it's also earned her an award from the college. "My teacher gave a report to Making Space informing them that I'd won an award, which I'll be collecting at a formal ceremony later this month.

"After that, Making Space has offered to support me to complete the Level 3 certificate in Health and Social Care. I'm so surprised with the way things have turned out, I left the charity shop to work with Making Space and now I'm climbing the career ladder. Who knows, I may even be a manager myself one day!

"I'm so grateful for the opportunity, and if there's one message I'd like to share it's that you're never too old to learn something new. Sometimes you really don't know what you're capable of until you try it!"

Prevention

At Making Space, we know that the real value of quality adult social care goes beyond day-to-day support — it lies in the long-term difference we make by preventing crisis before it happens. Much of our work focuses on early intervention and community-based support that reduces the need for more intensive and costly services later down the line. The impact of this preventative approach is both compassionate and cost-effective.

By focusing on early support and interventions, we reduce hospital admissions, readmissions, and the need for residential care, avoid and avert crisis ultimately saving money on more costly services. Some examples include:

Independent Living: By supporting people to live independent through our supported living services and extra care services we help people maintain their independence and stay healthy, reducing the need for more intensive care, or moving residential care. Our services empower people with care needs to stay healthy, safe, and independent in their own homes for longer. This reduces pressure on residential care settings and allows people to maintain control over their lives. The average annual cost of an individual living in mental health residential care in the UK is approximately £65,832 (£67,912 for dementia care and £80,808 for dementia nursing home – Care Homes UK, 2025).

Falls prevention and hospital admissions: Through our care services, social and activity groups (including yoga, exercise and movement classes) we are helping to reduce the amount of falls and enabling the safe lifting of people who do fall.

The Percy Bilton Charity, donated £3,860.00, which was used to purchase lifting cushions in our Coventry Extra care.

Lifting cushions can prevent hospital admissions by safely and efficiently lifting individuals who have fallen, avoiding the need for emergency services and potential hospital stays. They minimize the risk of injury to both the person who has fallen and the caregiver. By quickly and safely returning someone to a seated or standing position, lifting cushions can prevent prolonged periods on the floor, which can lead to serious complications like pressure ulcers, hypothermia, and pneumonia.

Funding has also enabled activities like yoga classes, which have had lifechanging benefits. Joanne is an 83-year-old unpaid carer who credited these sessions with helping her get up safely after a fall at home, potentially saving her life: "I live alone, and one of the yoga moves I learned ended up saving my life. We had practised getting up off the floor using a chair, and not long after, I had a fall at home. Thanks to those lessons, I was able to use the nearest chair to safely lift myself up. I'm so grateful, thank you!"

These types of initiatives results in direct and tangible savings e.g. the average cost of an ambulance callout varies depending on the situation. If a patient is transported to A&E, the estimated average cost is £417. (Kings Fund, Key Facts & Figures about the NHS). Similarly, the average cost of a one-week hospital stay can vary widely depending on the type of stay, the procedures involved. The NHS itself incurs costs that can vary significantly per day, from around £400 for a standard bed to over £1,800 for critical care. (Written Questions & Answers UK Parliament, 30 March 2023).

Combating loneliness and isolation: Through our social and activity groups (including arts and crafts, gardening, dementia cafes, games and quizzes) we are combating isolation and loneliness experienced by many people with care needs and unpaid carers. Loneliness is strongly linked to poor mental and physical health and increases the likelihood of GP visits and reliance on medication. By creating spaces for connection and joy, we improve wellbeing and help people stay well — which reduces demand on already stretched health services.

The evidence is clear: investing in early, preventative support in social care saves money. For every £1 spent on prevention, there is a return of £3.17 (Local Government Association, Earlier Action and Support: The Case for Prevention in Adult Social Care, 2024). This is not just a moral imperative — it's a sound investment.

At Making Space, we are not only improving lives; we are easing the burden on our health and social care systems. By supporting our work, donors and funders are backing a practical, proven solution that delivers lasting value — for individuals, communities, and the public purse alike.

Looking ahead

We are optimistic about the future of fundraising at Making Space. In the coming year, we aim to:

- Expand and deepen corporate partnerships and sponsorship opportunities
- Launch innovative pilot projects that complement our core services
- Invest further in digital tools and technologies to enhance fundraising and service delivery
- Promote legacy giving more proactively
- Encourage and support community-led fundraising
- Develop new fundraising events and awareness campaigns
- Strengthen our internal systems for tracking and celebrating support, including social value

With collaboration, creativity, and continued compassion, we believe we can continue to grow and thrive – bringing new ideas and much-needed support into our charity and, most importantly, the lives of the people we serve.





