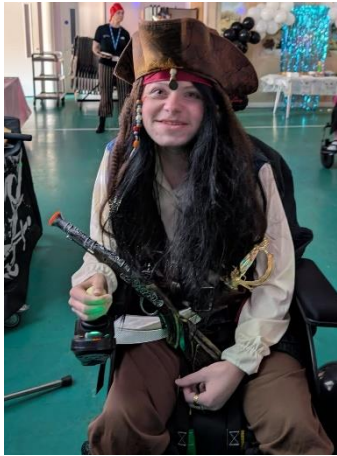


# Dame Hannahs Winter News 2025



## Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of Dame Hannahs News. We are delighted to be able to share our news and developments with you.

Over the last few months, we have welcomed several new adults to both our bungalows and Day Services, and we are pleased to say everyone is settling in well. The refurbishment of our Blachford bungalow is nearly complete so we will soon be able to welcome a further four residents which will take the total of adults we support to over 40. This will be a significant milestone for Dame Hannahs, and we are so grateful to our donors and fundraisers for making it possible for us to carry out this work. And it is so good to see our Day Services adults enjoying their newly refurbished room in the main building. The room is being used to meet as a group, relax and enjoy activities together. All made possible by our supporters!

All our adults have been leading busy and active lives and have been making excellent progress in different areas ranging from communications to decision making to social interaction. Our therapies team ensures that they are constantly developing whilst living life to the full. I know my colleagues on the Board appreciate the work of our highly professional teams who bring that special quality to our work.

We were pleased to have a visit from our local MP Rebecca Smith who very much enjoyed meeting our residents and staff and seeing first-hand the work we do. Rebecca also had an interesting discussion with my colleagues about our work and how she can support us in her role as a Member of Parliament. The challenges for Social Care are significant, and we rely on our parliamentarians to make it possible for organisations such as Dame Hannahs to continue with their vital work of supporting the most vulnerable in society.

Our Fundraising team has been busier than ever with the events at our site in Ivybridge proving very popular as well as our more established annual events such as the recent Autumn Lunch. We are very grateful to all our supporters who have taken on fundraising challenges for us, in particular Tugboats and Dolphins who have fundraised tirelessly for us all year raising over £12,000 for the refurbishment of our sensory room. Meanwhile we are excited to be opening four new charity shops to add to the existing eight shops which are thriving and raise important funds for us to carry out our work.

As always, we are hugely grateful to you all for your continued support and dedication to Dame Hannahs. Thank you!

**Professor David Coslett**  
Chair of Trustees



## MP Visit

Local South West Devon MP, Rebecca Smith, paid her first ever visit to Dame Hannahs recently. She met with directors James and Wayne, and trustee Nigel, before being given a thorough tour of the site which is quite unique given our variety of residential accommodation, facilities and staffing.

Rebecca was so pleased to meet some of the residents and was shown around the newly refurbished Newberry bungalow. While touring the main building she met members of staff and had an interesting and informative talk with our Speech and Language Therapist about the importance and range of communication aids being used by the adults at Dame Hannahs.



She also tried out the latest Eyegaze technology which we recently purchased so she could experience first-hand how challenging it can be to communicate without spoken word. To round off the tour Rebecca visited our Blachford building which is currently undergoing major renovations to convert it from a day service unit to a fully equipped and modernised residential bungalow.

Rebecca followed up her visit with the following quote: "It was such a joy to visit Dame Hannahs and to meet some of the lovely residents there. The team at Dame Hannahs work really hard to create a safe and caring home for adults who need intense support and it was a privilege to see this for myself. I am looking forward to supporting Dame Hannahs

over the coming years as their local Member of Parliament."

Trustee Nigel expressed his thanks that Rebecca took the time to visit Dame Hannahs; "We were delighted to welcome Rebecca on her first ever visit to Dame Hannahs. We really appreciated the opportunity to talk to her about the Trust and to demonstrate some of the amazing work we do here. We introduced her to several of our adults, and she enjoyed interacting and communicating with them. We would like to say a big thank you to Rebecca from everyone at Dame Hannahs for coming to see us. It's so important that the work we do and the challenges the care sector faces are known and talked about. Rebecca will carry those discussions forward through her role as our MP in parliament and across our communities."





## Fundraising



Tugboats and Dolphins CIC have shown huge commitment to their fundraising for Dame Hannahs throughout the year. Having completed their massive 950-mile bike ride from Plymouth to Santander they have continued to take on new challenges including a Peak District Challenge completing three of the highest peaks and 32 miles in 16 hours. Most recently they organised a Fight Night and recruited two teams of beginners to train over 10 weeks leading up to the Big Night. They have raised over £12,000 to fund the refurbishment of our sensory room.



Mary Watts organised a fundraising event to celebrate 80 years as a Polio survivor. Mary attended Dame Hannahs as a child in the 1940s when she was recovering from Polio. Over the last 20 years she has been an active and dedicated volunteer and fundraiser for the Trust. Her recent fundraising event was held in aid of both Dame Hannahs and British Polio Fellowship and raised nearly £6,000.

Sam Morcom, brother of one of our residents Josh, ran the London Marathon in aid of Dame Hannahs. Sam took on his first marathon as he is a keen sportsman and wanted a new challenge. He decided to raise funds for Dame Hannahs as we have been supporting Josh for many years. He has raised over £1,500.



Our Fundraising Team have been busier than ever giving talks to groups all over South Devon. Over the summer Debbie gave a talk to the Strete Social Club where she met up with long-time supporter Joan Kendall. Joan and her husband Roy used to volunteer at our Christmas Fayres and they are still active and generous supporters.

The team have also been running regular bucket collections across South and West Devon. They have been collaborating with supermarkets, and it is always a good opportunity to

engage with new potential supporters and raise awareness.

Children from Mount Kelly Prep School visited in the summer to perform in a concert. They sang some wonderful summer themed songs and did some brilliant signing too. Everyone really enjoyed their performance and the children really enjoyed meeting our adults and had lots of questions for them. Both the children and our adults really benefitted from the social interaction.



We welcomed 100 guests to our annual Autumn Lunch at Boringdon Park Golf Club recently. Everyone had a wonderful time getting together with friends and helping to raise £1,918. Our guests enjoyed a delicious lunch as well as a chance to buy beautiful gifts from a selection of stall holders. The guest speaker and author Pamela Vass gave a fascinating and entertaining talk about the Suffragettes in the South West.

Every summer we have a strong presence at a few local shows which really helps to raise awareness of the Trust and enables us to engage with current supporters and new audiences alike. At these shows we rely on our loyal volunteers to help out, and we are always very grateful for their hard work at the shows as well as their preparations beforehand.



Yealmpton Show - Our cake stand proved as popular as ever and we raised £843.50.

Kingsbridge Show – Every year we run the Refreshments tent and this year we raised £1432.45.

Rattery Show – This was our first time at this show as the organisers kindly chose Dame Hannahs as one of their charities alongside the RDA and gave a generous donation of £300.

Meanwhile our monthly Bingo Nights at our site in Ivybridge continue to prove very popular with the local community. In the last year these nights have generated £6,065 – Thank you for all of your support at these events.

## Charity Shops

Our eight existing charity shops are thriving and are an integral part of their local communities

We recently relocated our Ivybridge shop to the top of Fore Street. This new location has seen an ongoing boost in sales and increased interaction with the local community. Long standing volunteer shop manager Sue and her husband Dave, who have both volunteered for a number of years, are absolutely thrilled with the new shop. The improved layout, increased footfall and boosted sales which the team on site have generated has been amazing

We are excited to be opening two new shops in November. One in Plympton and the other on Mutley Plain in Plymouth. In addition to these openings we have a further two stores in the pipeline. Woolwell in north Plymouth and Tavistock. Each of these stores will further help our fundraising efforts long term to support all of the work we do here at Dame Hannahs.

If you would like to become a shop volunteer or would like to donate your preloved goods to us please contact our fundraising team on 01752 898135 or [supportus@discoverhannahs.org](mailto:supportus@discoverhannahs.org)

## Volunteers



We rely heavily on our wonderful volunteers and are eternally grateful for all their hard work and contribution to Dame Hannahs fundraising. Their support allows us to run a multitude of events and our retail outlets. Some give time and some make products or produce for us to sell to raise additional funds.

We are always looking for new volunteers and there are opportunities to get involved in all areas of the Trust. We are particularly keen to find people who would like to help out at our increasingly busy programme of fundraising

events. These include Bingo and Quiz Nights and larger events such as our Christmas Fayre. If you are interested, please contact [supportus@discoverhannahs.org](mailto:supportus@discoverhannahs.org)

One of our volunteers is Sue and she works in our Newton Abbot charity shop where her daughter Kathy is the manager. Sue started volunteering seven years ago and works there one day a week. She is one of many volunteers helping with a variety of tasks in the shop throughout the week. Her main responsibilities are working the till, sorting through donations, checking for Gift Aid, steaming clothes, putting items out on display, cleaning and pricing. There are also students and younger people who do placements in the shop and she has helped support them.

Sue first heard about Dame Hannahs when visiting Kathy in Ivybridge where she regularly saw our adults out and about. She had also visited several of our shops and attended our Christmas Fayres. Kathy volunteered in the shop for two years before becoming manager in 2015. Sue decided that she wanted to help Kathy and was motivated by the fantastic work carried out at Dame Hannahs. Her grandson Zach also volunteers for Dame Hannahs in the warehouse.



"I love coming to the shop, talking to people and building up relationships with regular customers and other volunteers. I work with lovely people and I love hearing the customers enthuse about our products and prices. I feel a sense of satisfaction and achievement after a day's work and seeing the results. It is really rewarding coming to work, seeing people, keeping motivated and having a routine. I love visiting Dame Hannahs in Ivybridge and it is great to see where the shop takings are going and also seeing other fundraising projects and events and how much they raise. All the staff at Dame Hannahs do such a fantastic job. Where would the young adults be without them? Everyone tells me that I am very approachable. I love chatting to people and am always happy to give a hug."

## Therapies

Our Therapies team are always looking at new ways to help our adults with their development in communications skills and physical mobility.

Following our very successful Summer Appeal we were able to purchase new communication equipment including a new iPad and all the necessary communications accessories and an iTalk 4. These will all make a big difference to our adults while developing their communications skills.

There has been a new initiative from the Speech and Language team who came up with the idea of a new communication aid to help our staff communicate more easily with our adults. Therapy Assistant Robyn created cards with core vocabulary symbols that can be attached to staff lanyards. Staff find it helpful to have this resource on hand when they are out and about and want to communicate with our residents.



Our adults benefit hugely from their sessions in the hydrotherapy pool, being out of their wheelchairs and relaxing in the warm water. We are very grateful to the Garfield Weston Foundation for their recent £25k grant towards the refurbishment of the pool and surrounding rooms.



Many of our adults benefit from using Mey Walkers and during the sunny weather they were able to use them outside. The physiotherapy team encourage this activity as walking promotes independence and confidence, engagement and participation; activates and strengthens core and leg muscles; helps in prevention of muscle deterioration and maintaining respiratory and circulatory system.

## Activities and Life Skills

We are very lucky to have regular weekly visits from external providers of a variety of activities that benefit our adults.

Tennis with coach Fiona from Double Bounce Inclusive Tennis South West CIC  
Our adults gain so much from her tennis sessions using movement and coordination and they learn new skills each week.

Yoga and Dance with Winnie from Far Flung Dance Theatre  
Our adults really benefit from all the stretching and movement and music.

Music Therapy with Beth

It is always heartwarming to see how our adults react to music in their own different ways. They can become so animated and their faces light up. They are also able to make choices as to which musical instruments are used in these sessions.





Our Activities Coordinator is very good at organising a busy schedule of activities every month which our adults both enjoy and really benefit from, whether it is learning and building on new skills or enjoying the social interaction with friends. This ranges from bingo and race nights to line dancing to Boccia and cultural activities. There are plenty of outdoor activities in the summer such as rounders and football.

Over the summer our adults visited different gardens to get some inspiration for our sensory garden here at Dame Hannahs. Each bungalow visited a different garden using smell, touch and visual senses. They were able to make their own choices and are now able to enjoy and benefit from the sensory essence of the garden.



We arrange regular visits to Made-Well near Hatherleigh, which is a vibrant, inclusive, not-for-profit community in the heart of Devon. They offer meaningful opportunities for people of all abilities through outdoor learning, animal care, horticulture, creative sessions, and supported volunteering. Our adults really enjoy making use of the adapted facilities in the playground and garden.



Groups have also started visiting Billacombe once a month. The team there organise an inclusive social day which is a great day out for our adults. They enjoy meeting new people, playing Bingo and then listening to live music and dancing. The Billacombe team always make them feel very welcome.

## Come Help Us Fundraise!

Over the coming months we have a variety of events and functions which you can attend. To find out more about these upcoming events you can visit our website and you can also sign up to our monthly e-newsletter.

On the first Friday of every month we hold a very popular Prize Bingo Night here at Dame Hannahs, Ivybridge. This is a family event with eight games, a raffle and a lucky game all with a variety of treats and refreshments available to purchase for a fun filled night.

Spring Luncheon – Elfordleigh Hotel – Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March



If you would like any information on fundraising challenges and our events please contact our fundraising team on 01752 898135 or email [supportus@discoverhannahs.org](mailto:supportus@discoverhannahs.org)  
You can also follow us on Facebook [@discoverhannahs](https://www.facebook.com/discoverhannahs) for regular updates.

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