

News Matters

Christmas 2024

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Wishing you all a Merry Christmas!

Welcome to News Matters

Hello everyone and welcome to the Christmas edition of News Matters.



The Christmas card competition has always been one of the highlights of the year, as it signals the start of the Christmas preparations. I was with Joan our winner at Dereham today and she was saying that she has entered every year since 2014... and was so delighted and proud that she had finally won. I too have always loved the competition 😊.

This will be my last Christmas with Independence Matters, and I want to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude for your unwavering support, not just throughout 2024, but for all the Christmases that I have had the privilege of being your Managing Director.

To our wonderful customers and families, your trust in us inspires us to strive for excellence every day. We enjoy supporting and celebrating this special time of year with you all, and I love all of the pictures and stories in this edition.

To our incredible colleagues, thank you for your commitment and passion.

May this festive season bring you all joy, peace, and happiness. Wishing you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Stock".

Sarah Stock, Managing Director

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Wishing
everyone a
**Merry
Christmas**
and a
**Happy New
Year**



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NORFOLK INDUSTRIES
FOR DISABLED PEOPLE
Part of Independence Matters



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Christmas Competition

2024

Thank you everyone who entered this year's Christmas competition, and to all our colleagues who supported customers with this activity. We had more entries than ever before (over 100!) so selecting just eight winners was really difficult.

As always 25 were chosen to feature on our Facebook advent calendar and we hope you've enjoyed counting down the days with us.



2

Denise, Rosewood Community Hub



3

Tommy, Attleborough Community Hub



1

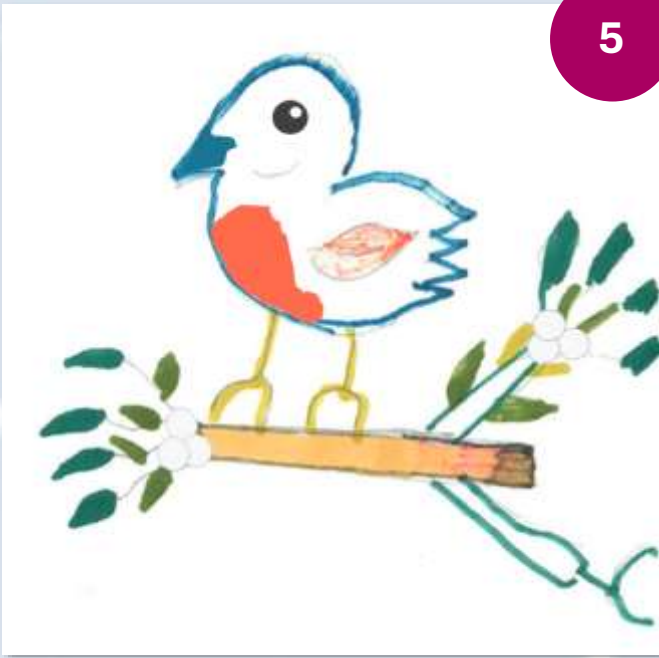
WINNER Judith, Dereham Community Hub



4

Jane, Rosewood Community Hub

5



Heather, Holt Community Hub

6



Martyn, Dereham Community Hub

8



Sarah, Attleborough Community Hub

7



Cynthia, Norwich Dementia Community Hub

9



Amber, Great Yarmouth Community Hub



10

Damon, Dereham Community Hub



12

Jacob, Dereham Community Hub



11

Kathryn, Norwich Supported Living



13

WINNER Jasmine, Dereham Community Hub

14



WINNER Denise, Holt Community Hub

15



Frederick, Norwich Dementia Community Hub

16



Maggie, Rosewood Community Hub

17



WINNER Michelle, Sprowston Community Hub

18



WINNER Jonathan, Holt Community Hub

20



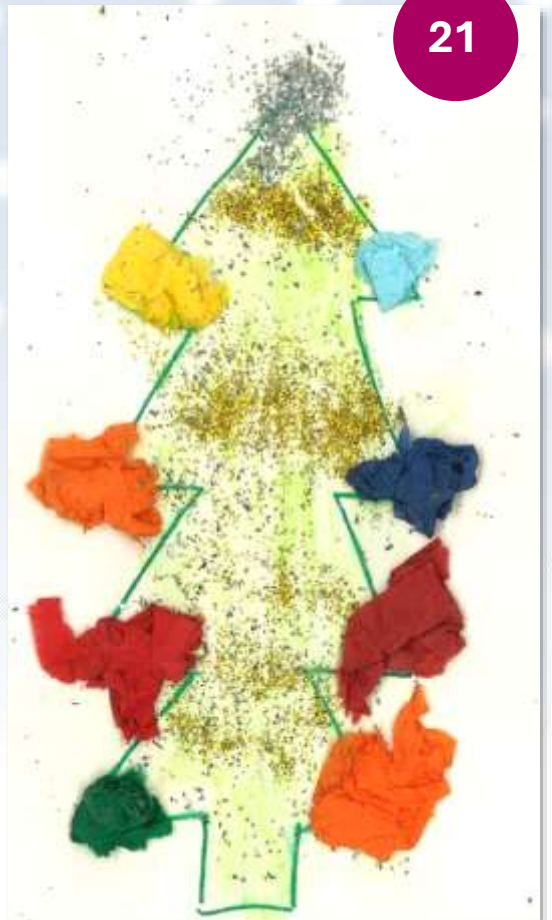
WINNER Steve, Crossroads Community Hub

19



Gillian, Rosewood Community Hub

21



Gary, Sprowston Community Hub

22



Robbie, Dereham Community Hub

23



Sheldon, Great Yarmouth Community Hub

24



WINNER Richard, Norfolk Industries



WINNER Joan, Dereham Community Hub

Almost 40 competition entries were selected to go through to final judging which was done by the Holt Working Together Group (with no one allowed to vote for their own!).

They were assisted by guest judges Teresa and Matthew from the Finance Team, and James from the Digital Team. We'd like to thank them for their help with selecting the winners, counting the votes and providing the Christmas music.

A big well done to our 8 winners who each received a £30 Amazon voucher:

2024 e-card

Joan at Dereham

2024 e-footer

Steve at Crossroads

2025 printed cards

Denise and Jonathan at Holt

Judith and Jasmine at Dereham

Michelle at Sprowston

Richard at Norfolk Industries.

Richard's drawing also features on the 2024 NI e-card.



Our Christmas Winners! 🎄

We presented our winners with their Amazon vouchers ahead of Christmas, so they were able to buy themselves something nice in time for the big day.

The presentations were done by Working Together Co-Ordinator, Maria Bond, and Coach & Wellbeing Trainer, Lorraine Nuccoll.



WINNER Joan, Dereham Community Hub



WINNER Michelle, Sprowston Community Hub



WINNER Jonathan, Holt Community Hub



WINNER Denise, Holt Community Hub



WINNER Jasmine, Dereham Community Hub

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WINNER Steve, Crossroads Community Hub

More of your Christmas entries

With a record number of entries, it felt wrong not to share even more of them, so here are a selection of the others we received. We look forward doing it all again and having another bumper entry in 2025!



WINNER Richard, Norfolk Industries



Doreen, Rosewood Community Hub



WINNER Judith, Dereham Community Hub



H Davies, Crossroads Community Hub

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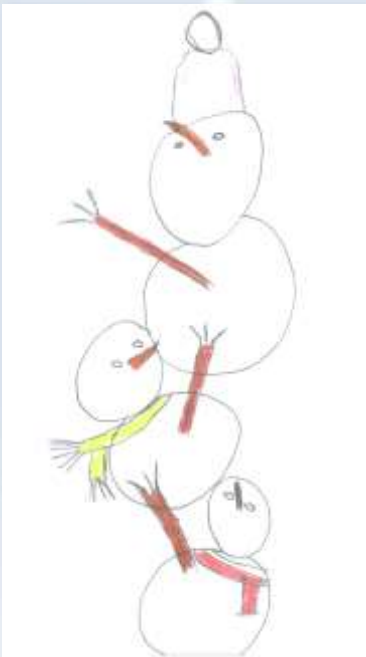
Ann, Sprowston Community Hub



Frances, Holt Community Hub



Gary, Dereham Community Hub



Tony, Rosewood Community Hub



Right: **Stephen S**,
Dereham Community Hub



Oliver N, Dereham Community Hub

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Leah, Dereham Community Hub



Justin, Dereham Community Hub



Melissa, Dereham Community Hub



Oliver B, Dereham Community Hub



Willy, Norwich Dementia Community Hub



Gill, Rosewood Community Hub

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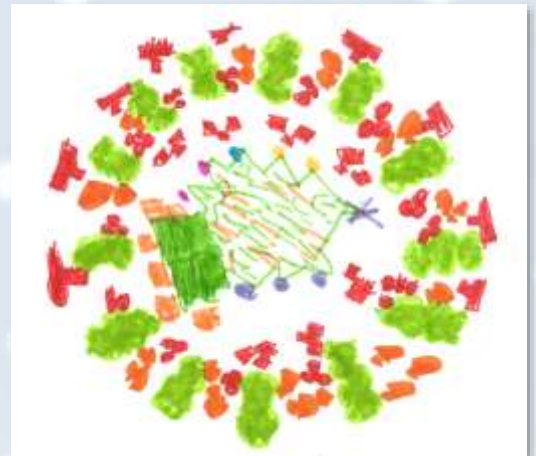
Arrabella, Dereham Community Hub



Simon, Holt Community Hub



Matthew, Holt Community Hub



Kim, Dereham Community Hub



Karen, Crossroads Community Hub

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Merry Christmas

from around our services!



Norwich Supported Living (Badger Corner) sent in this photo of their beautifully decorated tree ❤️



Cheeky elf was back at **Holt Community Hub** making mischief in the run up to Christmas, including sitting comfortably among the fabulous fireside display in the main hall.



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Customers at **Rosewood Community Hub** took their Christmas crafting to another level with these lovely festive snow globes. They each took one home, and the others were used for table decorations.



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Customers at **Crossroads Community Hub** celebrated with a festive-themed seated exercise class, followed by Christmas lunch.

The class was taken by local dance instructor, Val, from [Take The Lead](#) who got everyone shaking their sleigh bells along to the music.

Attleborough Community Hub enjoyed an early Christmas lunch on 27th November.

The delicious meal was cooked by colleagues Shelly and Laura which included the full works!

Turkey with sprouts served with or without bacon lardons, (vegetarian option available), Yorkshires, roast potatoes with thyme, pigs in blankets, chestnut stuffing, cauliflower cheese, carrots with cardamon, parsnips with honey, peas and swede. All served with turkey gravy.

All followed by Bailey's cheesecake, and lime posset served with ginger biscuits. Wow what a feast!



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These are just a small selection of the fabulous crafts and cakes that were on sale at **Attleborough Community Hub's** Christmas fair on 4th December. The art and craft gifts were made by customers, supported by colleagues.

A big thank you to the Hub's caretakers Ray and Graham for their woodwork skills and artistic talents, and Kerry for the amazing cakes.



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Customers at **Dereham Community Hub** helped design and decorate a tree for the Christmas tree festival at St Nicholas Church. The tree included memories and thoughts of family and friends and was displayed at the church from 22nd – 29th November.

The festival attracted over 1600 visitors and raised £4000 pounds which have been split evenly between Dereham Cancer Care and a project to provide new toilet facilities at the church.



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Great Yarmouth Community Hub's very own Santa (aka colleague AJ) was back in action, taking a break from his busy schedule to visit customers at the Hub.



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Some lovely photos of customers at **William Day Centre** who have been busy making these wonderful festive items.



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William Day Centre customers were also busy in the kitchen making these yummy looking mince pies 🍪.



Meanwhile, over at **Norwich Dementia Community Hub**, Buffy received this bandana for Christmas. We can't possibly imagine her being naughty!



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It's been a fabulous run up to Christmas at **Attleborough Community Hub**. Their Christmas feast was followed by Festive Bingo. Colleague Kerry raised funds for the prizes by selling raffle tickets to win a beauty calendar she made herself. Happy, happy, customers!



The Hub's drama group put on a production of 'Snowflake and the Seven Plonkers' 😂. The audience said the play was fabulous and funny (we're laughing already!). A big well done to the cast, who have been rehearsing this for the last six months, and a big shout out to Mel, Maddy, Eva and John.



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There were some special four-legged visitors to **Norwich Dementia Community Hub**. Everyone enjoyed meeting the guinea pigs from Cuddly Cavies, who brought their own version of Christmas lunch with them 🥕🥦🥬



Attleborough Community Hub held a Winter Wonderland Ball on 18th December. Customers and colleagues dressed in their best, local band Stardust Duo provided the music, and Shelly and Laura provided tasty goody boxes.

Check out lots of lovely pictures from the event on the next two pages.

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It was all hands on deck helping with Christmas festivities at **Dereham Community Hub**. Customers and colleagues baked Christmas cakes, made lots of different crafts and sweet treats for the Christmas bazaar, which was a great success, raising over £500..



A grand Christmas dinner was enjoyed by everyone, customers helped with preparations which included lots of potato peelings! On the day they were rewarded with a magnificent Christmas lunch, cooked and served by colleagues, followed by musical entertainment from Elvis.



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This December, Rebecca had the opportunity to celebrate the season with a Christmas meal alongside friends at the Swallowtail Bistro in Acle. The festive occasion was filled with delicious food, great company, and warm holiday cheer. Rebecca shared that the meal was “lovely” and highlighted how much she enjoyed the experience.

Rebecca expressed gratitude for the support of her care worker, Jo D, who made the outing possible. “I wouldn’t have been able to go without Jo,” Rebecca said, reflecting on the vital role Jo plays in supporting her independence and helping her embrace opportunities like this one.

Rebecca’s story is a reminder of the value of community, connection, and the difference compassionate care can make. It’s wonderful to see her enjoying the festive season while also continuing to make such a positive impact at the care farm.

We’re so proud of Rebecca and all she achieves, and we wish her—and all our customers—a joyful holiday season!

Rebecca enjoys a festive meal at Swallowtail Bistro

We’re delighted to have one of **Home Support Matters** valued live-in care customers, Rebecca G, feature in this edition of News Matters.

Rebecca is an incredible individual who thrives on her involvement with local social enterprise, [Clinks Care Farm](#).

Her contributions are truly inspiring - Rebecca helps grow and package fresh produce and plays a vital role in running and working in the on-site farm shop. Her dedication embodies the spirit of community and purpose that Clinks Care Farm promotes.



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A fabulous festive trip

PAS South customer Emma, send us this lovely report and photos about her festive trip to London.

We made a plan to go to London to look at all the Christmas lights and look around the shops. We caught the train from Diss to London Liverpool Street Station and then caught the Elizabeth Line. This new tube line is disabled friendly and has wi-fi.



We went to Fortnum and Mason first. I loved their beautiful window displays and the wonderful Christmas trees and decorations.



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We caught a bus to Trafalgar Square. There we visited the German Christmas Market. We then went onto Harrods.

I thought the food hall was amazing. I brought a freshly squeezed melon juice. Although a cup of tea would have cost £6.50.



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We then went onto Covent Garden, we watched the street performers and walked around looking at all the lights.

We got back to Charring Cross Station using a Christmas themed tuk tuk. Then we got the tube back to Liverpool Street station and got the return train home.

I had an amazing day and would love to do this again next year.



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Louise's contract congratulations!

We are really happy to report that Louise de Spon, 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.

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



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Heather's NSPCC fundraiser

Customer Heather organised a pre-Christmas fundraiser at **Holt Community Hub** in November in aid of the NSPCC.

The event raised an INCREDIBLE £190 by selling cakes, doing a raffle, name the teddy bear, guess the amount of marbles in a jar, and get a ball through the hoop game.

There were lots of Christmas items on sale which were made by Hub customers and looked absolutely brilliant.



Lots of fun was had by everyone, people were smiling, laughing and enjoying being together and of course enjoying eating the cakes!!!

Loads of time and effort went into the planning of this event, including making banners and posters to advertise it. Really well done to Heather who has never been solely responsible for putting on something like this before. She already has plans for the next one... Awesome work Heather!



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Hub's fundraiser for anti-bullying

Customers and colleagues at Dereham Community Hub supported Anti-Bullying Week by having an odd sock day on 13th November.

Daisy's Café made and sold a selection of cakes, and instead of making cheese twists, made cheesy socks! 🤪



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The Hub also raised funds by selling anti-bullying bracelets and in total raised £107.85 which was given to the Anti-Bullying Alliance.

Sessions were held to discuss bullying, where everyone shared their thoughts and designed their own posters which were displayed on the day. Great job everyone!



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Passing with distinction!

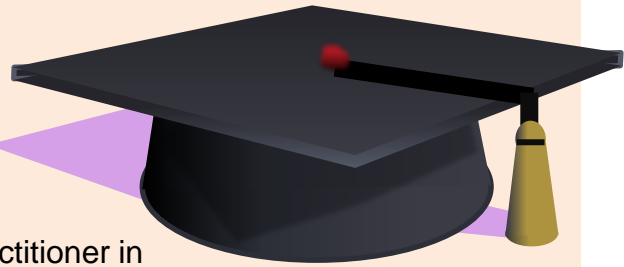
Congratulations to our latest group of newly-qualified colleagues

Belinda Siely - Level 5 Diploma, Leadership in Adult Care, passed with a distinction.

Chris Bishop - Level 5 Diploma, Leadership in Adult Care, passed with a distinction.

Abigail Cropley - Level 4 Diploma, Lead Practitioner in Adult Care, passed with a distinction.

Adam Hollings - Level 4 Diploma, Lead Practitioner in Adult Care, passed with a distinction.



To have all four colleagues join the ranks of our learners with distinctions is fabulous news and very well deserved. The Level 5 is a particularly difficult course of learning and is equivalent to a Higher National Diploma (HND) or the first two years of a Bachelors Degree, so getting a distinction is no mean feat.

It's also worth noting that Belinda, Abigail and Adam have made it a clean sweep of distinctions for the PAS North Management Team! Well done everyone.

IM's apprenticeship providers, Connect2Care, tell us we have had 14 Level 5 learners over the past seven years. Seven of these have passed with distinction, five have passed with merits, and two were straight passes. To have half of our learners achieve at this level is a credit to both them and to IM.

Lorraine Nuccoll, Coach & Wellbeing Trainer



Happy New Year!
We'll see you in 2025

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