Helping the older people of Southend on Sea and surrounding areas to live healthier, happier and more independent lives



Impact Report

For the period 1st April 2025-30th September 2026

Supporting older people since 1974

Chair and CEO statement

This year has been one of progress, partnership and lasting impact. Together, we have strengthened the support available to older people across Southend-on-Sea and the surrounding area.

A defining milestone was the £1,175,000 purchase of The Haven Community Hub, made possible through the Community Ownership Fund and £235,000 in match funding. Securing our home protects a valued community asset and provides a firm foundation for the future.

We expanded our befriending offer with an LGBTQ+ Coffee and Conversation Group and new sessions in Eastwood and Shoeburyness, creating more inclusive opportunities for friendship and connection.

With current figures showing that Southend on Sea has a higher prevalence of dementia than the average in England, our Day Centre remains vital. Taking over Southend City Council's dementia groups in April 2025 has extended our reach and enabled more people to access specialist support.

We also strengthened our benefits and form-filling service. Three dedicated volunteers now help older people secure the financial support to which they are entitled, improving financial security and wellbeing.

None of this would be possible without our trustees, staff, volunteers, donors, funders and sponsors. Your commitment enables older people to live healthier, happier and more independent lives. Thank you for helping us build a stronger, more connected community.



Mike Nicholson

Chair of Trustees



Sarah Wilson

Chief Executive Officer

Who we are

Supporting older people since 1974

Helping older people across Southend and surrounding areas live happier, healthier and more independent lives.



Care and connection

Dementia and neurological day care

Telephone and face-to-face befriending • Community café

Health and wellbeing

30+ wellbeing classes and activities

Beauty treatments • Foot care • Ear wax removal

Practical support

Support and advice • Benefit and financial advice • Form filling

Find us at The Haven Community Hub

Hamlet Court Road, Westcliff

THE HAVEN
COMMUNITY HUB

Our Impact at a Glance

2025/2026

1,170
Face-to-face befriending visits

1,009
Telephone befriending calls

3,742
Visits to Coffee & Coffee Conversation sessions

4,538
Visits to our Dementia Day Centre

352
People received benefit & form filling advice

200 +
Volunteers supported

65-80
Biggest age group we support

SS0 SS9 SS2
Top three postcode areas

Falls Prevention and Strength Classes

2025/2026

1,814

attendances at our classes

Why these classes matter

Build strength

Improve balance

Support confidence

Stay independent for longer

Preventing falls, protecting independence

Our four weekly Falls Prevention and Strength classes help older people stay active, confident and independent. By improving strength and balance, participants can move more safely, making everyday tasks easier. This preventative support can reduce falls, injuries and hospital admissions while improving quality of life. It also helps people remain independent for longer and supports healthier ageing.

With hip fractures alone accounting for around **1.8 million hospital bed days** and **£1.1 billion** in hospital costs every year, helping older people stay stronger and steadier can benefit both individuals and the wider health and care system.



I attended this class to improve my balance and flexibility, hopefully to strengthen my arms and legs. I walk with a rollator or two sticks. Tabby was extremely helpful and tailored the exercises to my needs and ability. It was a great course and I will use the techniques I learnt in my own home.

Dementia Day Centre

2025/2026

2,823
visits

47
clients

For loved ones

Purposeful activity, friendship and specialist support

For carers

Trusted respite, reassurance and time to recharge

Dementia in Southend-on-Sea: A Growing Need for Support

Dementia is a growing issue for Southend-on-Sea. Southend-on-Sea City Council has highlighted the area's ageing population and increasing prevalence of dementia, while the wider Southend, Essex and Thurrock Dementia Strategy estimated that 21,972 people aged 65+ across the county of Essex were living with dementia with this figure projected to increase by 33% by 2030.

Mum absolutely loves going to her "club" twice a week. She enjoys all the activities; singing, games and special guests. Moreover, the staff are all magnificent and treat mum like their own.

Such a special place!



Our Health and Wellbeing Impact

2025/2026

Tai Chi	**1,300**	**"Tai Chi has helped me a great deal, it has lowered my blood pressure, is helping with my balance and is a great social activity which had been missing since I retired 2 years ago"**
Keep Fit	**1,278**	**"Thank you for keeping us fit as we age! Gives us a reason to get up in the morning"**
Table Tennis	**3,174**	**"Playing table tennis at the Hub means a great deal of laughter accompanies every match which is equally as important as the physical activity"**
Choir	**1,316**	**"The best thing about coming to choir is making friends. Singing is so good for my mental health"**
Whist	**1,421**	**"It is so lovely to get together every Friday afternoon and do something I enjoy with likeminded people"**
Boxfit	**728**	**"Both my partner and I have been going to box fit for around 12 months now, it is a great way of keeping fit and enjoyable with the other participants cheering each other on. I would definitely recommend Box fit for both young and older people"**
Art Class	**1,503**	**"My nephew and I have been coming to art for over a year now. We both look forward to the classes. Great atmosphere, made friends, helps with mental health and wellbeing"**

Figures show total class attendees in 2025/2026

Supporting People to Claim The Benefits They are Entitled To

2025/2026

335
People helped

We helped 335 people complete benefit forms. Our practical, one-to-one support helps older people navigate complex forms and access financial help they may otherwise miss.

Why this support matters

£2.8bn

of Pension Credit & Housing Benefit went unclaimed by older people in a single year.

800,000

eligible pensioner households were not receiving Pension Credit.

37%

of pensioner households eligible for Pension Credit were missing out.

Removing the barriers

Why people may miss out

- Forms can feel complicated
- People may not know what they can claim
- Some people do not have help to apply

The difference we make

- Clear, friendly explanations
- Practical help completing forms
- Greater confidence to claim entitlements

Helping people complete a form can be the first step towards greater financial security, independence and peace of mind.

The process was made a lot easier and it has made so much difference to me

I would have struggled so much with this form, without help. I am so grateful for the support

Volunteer Impact

2025/2026

200+
volunteers supported

623
volunteer hours given each month

8
services supported

For some people I am the only person they speak to regularly. A short conversation can lift someone's mood, ease their loneliness and remind them that they matter. Being a telephone befriender has shown me just how powerful simple human contact can be.

I feel involved and needed in my volunteer role. I've learnt new skills and have more belief in myself. It's great to receive positive feedback from the paid staff!

The difference volunteers make

Extend our reach

Create connection

Services supported

Benefits of volunteering

Purpose

Friendship

New skills

Confidence

Looking Ahead

20265/20276

The Challenges We Face

- **Growing demand:** More older people need timely, personalised support.
- **Rising costs:** Delivering safe, high-quality services is becoming more expensive.
- **Sustainable funding:** Long-term income is needed to protect and develop essential services.

Our Priorities

Reach more older people

Make support easier to access across our communities.

Strengthen core services

Protect quality while responding to changing local needs.

Build sustainable income

Develop diverse funding and stronger supporter relationships.

Deepen partnerships

Work with local organisations to extend our collective impact.

Improving The Haven

Our focus in 2026/2027 will be to improve accessibility at The Haven, enabling us to extend and improve our services to the whole community.

Support Our Work

Together, we can make a lasting difference.

Your support helps us strengthen services, create connections and improve wellbeing across our community.

Donate

Make a one-off or regular gift to help sustain and develop vital local services.

Volunteer

Share your time, skills and experience to support people and strengthen our community.

Partner

Work with us to share expertise, reach more people and create greater local impact.

Fundraise

Organise an event, take on a challenge or bring people together in support of our work.

Get involved

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THE HAVEN COMMUNITY HUB