



working with disabled people



*Winner of BBC Radio Solent 'Make A Difference' Awards 2025 in the Community Group section*

# Annual Report 2024-25

# Chairman's Introduction

**Thank you for taking the time to read our Annual Report. It contains a summary of our achievements through the year, our challenges and plans for the future. We are entering a period of significant change, driven by the overall funding environment, demand for more services and the impact this has on the charity sector as a whole. You will have heard much about SEND provision in the media, and as many of our services are for children and young people, the pressure to provide for an increasing number of families is challenging. There are no additional resources so the charity, together with its commissioners, are looking at ways that make service distribution fairer, and more innovative to reach as many people as possible. This has understandably been difficult for families, but we are, and will continue to communicate in a timely way about changes.**

The year 2024/25 saw growth in the range of activities provided and the number of families and participants supported. The charity now provides a specialist playscheme for Hampshire children, our teenage project has introduced new activities that have been very popular, and as headlined last year, the over 25 group that opened its doors in the autumn has developed into a co-production enterprise with participants who use the service. The Community Centre at Landport has increased the number of hirers, and our employability programme, Interactiv, based at Landport, has continued to flourish, with increasing numbers of participants moving on to paid work. This is a fantastic achievement for them, and our thanks also goes to an increasing number of local employers who have given them these opportunities.

Our commitment to staff is exemplified through training opportunities for all. This year a second group of project leaders have undertaken management training to help them in their day to day work, the feedback from which has been very positive. As a charity, we are assessed every three years to maintain our "Investors In People" award and I'm delighted to report that this has been achieved. Our assessment is essentially what our staff and volunteers say about us, so it's really pleasing that the charity is viewed so positively. We operate on the basis of continuous improvement, and we have agreed an action plan with our assessor, to be reviewed regularly..

This year has seen changes in the Trustee group. Joe Harbour, our treasurer, retired after 20 years. He has been a great supporter of the charity and ensured our income and expenditure balanced at year end. Our thanks go to him for his service. We have been fortunate to secure a new treasurer, Andy Osborn, who has a background in corporate finance and is a qualified accountant. I would also like to thank Bill John who stepped down as a Trustee in the spring of 2025 for his fantastic support and I'm pleased to report that he will continue with us as a volunteer. Alan Bowie, a recently retired GP with experience as a carer has also joined our ranks. Trustees continue to meet regularly, providing effective governance for the charity. We are fortunate in having such a rich pool of talent supporting our operational staff.

The charity has undertaken a root and branch assessment of its finances to ensure we have a robust base to move forward. The impact of yearly rises in minimum wage, the cost of living crisis, and more recently the rise in national insurance

contributions mean that balancing income and expenditure is very challenging. Consequently the charity has taken decisions that ensure we can only provide services that we are funded for, and that we reduce our overheads to an affordable level. We have been fortunate in securing a legacy grant from the Edward Gostling Foundation which has assisted us greatly with managing this change. With our partners we will seek to develop innovative ways of working to ensure that our families and participants receive the best possible support with the resources available.

I pay tribute to our staff and volunteers who make Enable Ability an outstanding charity, respected and supported across the city and beyond. There is a continued focus on activities that seek to develop skills and confidence, that truly enable our service users to lead as fulfilling lives as possible; a thread running through all that we do.

At Enable Ability, we prioritise risk management to safeguard our mission, resources, and stakeholders. Our risk management framework includes identifying potential risks, assessing their impact, and implementing strategies to mitigate them. By regularly reviewing and updating our risk management practices, we aim to maintain the highest standards of accountability and transparency, ensuring that our charity remains resilient and able to deliver on its mission effectively.

The charity could not provide the range of services without the financial support of many organisations and funders both locally and nationally. Our thanks go to Portsmouth City Council and Hampshire County Council, along with the National Lottery and Children In Need. Thank you to them and all of our other funders and partners, listed on the final page of this report. Finally, on behalf of all those who benefit from Enable Ability's support, a huge thank you to our staff, volunteers and funders.

This will be my last report to you as I intend to stand down as chair in the summer after 12 years in the role.

**Jon Muller**  
**Chair of Trustees**



# Manager's Report

**During the 2024-25 financial year the charity sustained all of its services, extended its breadth of provision and, of necessity, explored efficiency savings to achieve a financially viable way forward.**

The core services that are funded via Portsmouth City Council's Short Breaks Contract provided ever-popular venue-based play schemes for high dependency needs children; inclusive play schemes focussing on activities in the local community; a Junior Club that, following a lengthy consultation process, has now introduced regular 'Boxing' and 'Dungeons and Dragons' sessions; and the Teenage Projects - which have provided a wealth of activities on a weekly basis during term-time together with a stimulating programme of events during school holiday periods.

From 1st April 2024 Enable Ability took over the running of a specialist play scheme at Riverside School in Crookhorn (funded via Hampshire County Council's Short Breaks Contract), delivering projects during the Easter and Summer holiday periods. As well as providing a valuable service for primary school aged children, it enabled the charity to develop an excellent partnership with a Hampshire-based school that has ultimately led to further funding being made available to ensure continuity into 2025-26.

We are very grateful to Testlands, a Southampton-based charity, for financially supporting our Youth Club via a Government grant that they had received to cover projects in both Southampton and Portsmouth. As well as enabling our 18-25 year-olds to participate in wide-ranging events throughout the year, the income that we received additionally enabled us to run a programme of transport training for teenagers with disabilities.

Whilst these and associated projects flourished, a pilot project for individuals aged 25+ was started in the autumn of 2024 to meet the needs of eligible adults (including those that have now outgrown our Youth Project). We are grateful to 'The Hive' for awarding us a 12-month grant to enable us to develop the project alongside a newly set up co-production group that is characterised by the extent to which its participants influence and contribute to the activities provided and enjoy greater freedom in support of furthering their independence.

Landport Community Centre has continued to increase its number and range of external hirers during the year whilst our employability scheme (Inter Activ) has now supported more than 100 individuals into employment, volunteering and education. During 2024-25 we completed a Cranfield Trust Journey to Excellence (J2E©) consultancy project. With their support we have significantly reduced operational costs in the café and actively pursued options going forward for the development of a Tech Hub to extend the range of skills that participants can gain whilst on the programme (including web site building).

Midway through the financial year we were required to put together a tender for our Adult Befriending Service as a part of an 'Open Framework Agreement for the provision of Day Opportunity Services within Portsmouth'. As one of the providers to have successfully secured a contract we have since been able to regularise our referrals, charging and invoicing system for the service so that it is now more cost-effective and runs a lot more efficiently.

Concurrently the charity has continued to run a number of fundraising events throughout the year. These have included bingo nights, quizzes, our ever-popular Christmas fair and many sponsored events (e.g. parachute jumps and fitness-based activities). The most innovative of these was a 'Fire Walk' which took place at Portsmouth's Rugby Club in late August; despite the high costs associated with the hire of a registered event provider, the charity raised almost £3,000 (and without any injuries!).

During November the 'Children in Need' filming crew came to our Saturday Club at Morelands Primary School to capture highlights of one of the projects that they fund; the footage was broadcast on 'Children in Need' day as one of the key features for the region and our thanks go to one of our parents who closed the clip by saying that 'it takes a village to bring up a child with a disability and you couldn't ask for a better village than Enable Ability'.

Meanwhile we are indebted to the many organisations and individuals that have supported us during the last 12 months (all of whom can be found listed on the back page of this report). Particular thanks must be given to the Edward Gostling Foundation for a very sizeable legacy grant that has helped us through challenging times. I would also like to express gratitude to all of the staff, volunteers and trustees for their valuable input and the vital part that they have played in the charity's ongoing success.

Thirty years on from my first involvement with the charity (to run a pilot special needs playscheme in 1995), I will be retiring at our November 2025 AGM; it has been a fascinating journey and I look forward to continuing to offer support to Enable Ability in a voluntary capacity after that time.

**Richard Soutar**  
Enable Ability Manager



# Core activities

2024-25

## Playschemes

### Specialist Playschemes

These run through every school holiday period. In total, for the main summer holiday scheme, we provided 5,424 hours of support (4,585 in 2023) to 112 children (116). With all of our Play Schemes there is a huge demand - and this is especially so during the long summer school break. Inevitably this has resulted in our waiting list growing considerably - though we do place limits on the number of days we can offer to each individual to address this as effectively as we can. In an ideal world we would like our schemes to be expanded to more fully meet the local need; however, funding and staffing issues make this very difficult to achieve. We employed 158 staff (132 in 2023) on Play Schemes over the summer period alone and this, more than anything else, shows just how large and complex they have now become.

### Inclusive Playschemes

Our inclusive playschemes are designed to support children with SEN in mainstream schools and who cannot be accommodated at any other play scheme due to their additional needs. Our aim is to encourage children to take part in different activities within the community and interact with their peers and develop their social skills in a safe environment. We offer activities such as swimming, soft play and trips to the local parks. These playschemes are funded by PCC HAF (Holiday Activities and Food) at Easter and Summer; these are partly funded by PCC Short Breaks during other school holidays.

### Riverside Playscheme

In January 2024 Enable Ability were approached by another organisation to take over the running of the playscheme at Riverside school in Waterlooville as they were unable to continue delivering this project. It is funded by Hampshire County Council short breaks and for children that attend Riverside school.



### Saturday Club

This project offers stimulating activities for children with very high dependency needs during school term-time, whilst giving families and carers much needed respite. The project is run with funding mainly received from Children in Need. A total of 45 children attended (56 in 2024) and 50 staff (62) supported them; the slightly reduced number of children that we supported resulted from the significantly higher needs of some of those that attended, thereby requiring greater staff to child ratios. A comprehensive programme of activities was provided on a week-to-week basis.

### Befriending

#### Child Befriending

This service does what it says on a one-to-one basis for very high-dependency needs children. In total hours of support 9,857 (8,484 in 2024) were delivered with 88 clients (79); the befriending was provided by 47 staff (46).

#### Adult Befriending

This is an on-going service offering companionship, support and encouragement to those who are socially or physically isolated through disability. In the age range of 18 to 25 the service provided (3,704 in 2024) hours of support being provided by 21 staff (22). Befriending for adults over the age of 25 years amounted to 2,856 hours (2,680) of support being provided by 14 staff (17) to 13 clients (15).

### Inter Activ

This project aims to offer young people with SEND the support they need to obtain employment or move into future training/ education. Inter Activ runs a number of Work Experience Programmes designed to provide our participants with a range of hard and soft skills augmented with more traditional classes involving Mathematics and English language.

Each of the participants is assigned a Personal Skills Coach whose role is to support, guide and track their progress against pre-defined outcomes based on their own individual journey. Current Work Experience Programmes include:

- PC Repair Shop focused on re-cycling old PC's
- Working in the Café at Landport Community Centre preparing food and serving at tables.
- Working for What's It Like? creating and editing 360°-Videos
- Marketing and Sales related to re-cycled PC's and accessories





## Wheelchair Basketball

Weekly sessions are held at Portchester Community School with regular matches taking place against other clubs. Positive outcomes for the main group primarily relate to improvements in fitness and health. Individual outcomes include recognition that four of our former participants now play for National League teams and Team GB.



## Landport Community Centre

This is the base for Inter Activ (our Employability Scheme) and is also used for many other Enable Ability activities; these include one of the HAF funded play-schemes and a number of fundraising events. It has also become a central hub for residents in the local Charles Dickens ward – an area which has the highest level of deprivation in the city of Portsmouth and is within the 10% most deprived wards in the country.

Our weekly Landport Larder Scheme is run from the Centre in a similar way to a food-bank, with an average of between 20 and 30 visiting each week. The local community is further supported here via Health and Wellbeing events run by Portsmouth City Council. Some of our other user groups include Solent NHS Trust, Portsmouth University Nigerian Group, Portsmouth Young Kurds, The Kings Theatre, local church groups, two dance academies, a female only Zumba class, two LGBTQ+ groups and a local Councillor (who uses it for his surgeries). The Workers Education Association are running classes most days on a whole range of issues and subjects.

## Junior Clubs

**Portsmouth Junior Club** is partly funded by Portsmouth City Council short breaks. Due to lack of attendance we had to close the gym sessions we had previously delivered. We now run a Dungeons and Dragons group and support a local Boxing group to deliver SEND sessions.

**Dungeons and Dragons Club** meets once every four weeks. The minimum age for this activity is 10, but there is no upper age limit. We have two dedicated and experienced Dungeon Masters who will be at every session.

**Boxing Group:** we work in partnership with Artful Dodgers Boxing Academy, Cosham to provide three SEND boxing sessions each week.

**Hampshire Junior Club** is part-funded by Hampshire County Council Short Breaks. This group runs a programme of sports and social events every week during term-time that includes sports and social sessions and is for young people aged 5 to 12 years of age with physical and learning difficulties.

## Teenage and Youth Projects

**Portsmouth Teenage Project** is partly funded by Portsmouth City Council Short Breaks and works with young people aged 13 to 18. They meet regularly during school term time and throughout the school holiday periods on a daily basis. The activities are set to be both challenging and rewarding and have included go-karting, wakeboarding, skiing, kayaking and paddle boarding, to name just a few.

**EA Youth Project** is specifically for young adults aged 18 to 25 years; attendees meet weekly during term-time and throughout the school holiday periods on a daily basis. The project continues to have a high demand from service users with exciting activities. There are 35 young adults registered on the scheme with 25 or more of them attending each month. Its great strength is its capacity to develop friendships that continue away from the project, whereby the young people choose to meet up outside of the group for social activities.

This year Enable Ability identified a need for a focus group, council or forum that was representative of the young people with disabilities and led by them to benefit the local community. As a direct result of this our **Over 25 Co-production and Social Group** was formed; it meets 3 times a month - twice for social activities and once for the co-production meeting (where guest speakers are invited to talk to the group), this gives the service users an opportunity to talk about what is topical, sharing good news, offering advice to others and sharing information that may prove helpful to others. The other two sessions are for social activities.

## Advocacy

This project gives help and support through a team of experienced advocates to some of the most vulnerable in the community and holds a regular drop-in surgery at Landport Community Centre. Funding for the project is via donations and through grant-awarding bodies.

# Income and Expenditure Account

for the year ending 31st March 2025

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2025 £</b>	<b>2024 £</b>
Donations & Legacies	278,663	105,406
Charitable Activities	1,299,527	1,296,298
Investments	42,874	49,590
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,621,064</b>	<b>1,451,294</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Raising funds	3,346	10,002
Charitable Activities	1,508,985	1,431,768
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,512,331</b>	<b>1,441,770</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) for the year</b>	<b>108,733</b>	<b>9,524</b>

## BALANCE SHEET

### Fixed assets

Tangible assets	605,651	612,784
Investments	60,347	59,586
Investment Property	175,000	175,000
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>840,998</b>	<b>847,370</b>

### Current assets

Debtors	181,614	71,792
Cash at Bank and in hand	330,212	341,951
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>511,826</b>	<b>413,743</b>
Creditors falling due within 1 yr	17,118	34,140
<b>Total assets less liabilities</b>	<b>1,335,706</b>	<b>1,226,973</b>

## Financial Highlights

The financial year that ended on 31 March 25 saw the Charity's financial position remain stable. This was significantly helped by a donation (endowment) from the Edward Gostling Foundation, allowing the Charity to weather several challenges, and yet still provide the outstanding services it is renowned for. The Charity continues to make efficiency improvements in the running, support and governance costs that are incurred, and hence as a Charity we believe we continue to direct a greater percentage of our income into delivering activities to support our charitable aims.

## How we spend our funds

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
Fundraising and publicity	0.5%	0.7%
Support & Governance Costs	8.5%	11.2%
Charitable Activities	91.2%	88.1%

## Reserves policy:

*To hold 3 months of expenditure, less play-scheme costs. This has therefore been fixed at £278,000 and will be maintained throughout the next year.*

Full details of our financial position together with a detailed report by Trustees can be found on our fully audited financial statement which is available to view on our web-site.

These financial statements have been prepared using the statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

**Agreed by the Trustees on 31st Jan 2026.**  
**Andy Osborn – Honorary Treasurer**



# The way ahead

**The charity faces a challenging period in terms of both the financial situation and service provision. Financial headwinds, affecting many national and local charities, are unlikely to abate, and some difficult decisions may be needed soon to ensure the charity's robustness.**

This means that we need to be confident that none of our services are costing more to run than the income we raise or receive. We anticipate that the many pressures on costs will continue and that local authority funding will not increase in line with demand and our increasing costs

On the service front, our short breaks contract with Portsmouth City Council is in the final year and the Council have signalled that they wish to undertake consultation to ensure that their funding is used as effectively and efficiently as possible, which we fully understand. We believe that our services are run efficiently and that they offer children and young people varied experiences and opportunities to develop friendships, skills and independence while having fun. Enable Ability will contribute to the consultation that takes place this year and do all we can to promote the wellbeing of our clients and families.

At the time of going to print, we received the very disappointing news that our bid for further National Lottery funding for Inter Activ, our employability programme, has not been successful. We are grateful to the lottery for 6 years of funding, and recognise demand significantly outstrips supply. That said, we believe in our product, so many young people have had wonderful outcomes. We are currently exploring how it may be possible to continue to provide this service which has been life changing for many of the participants. We have developed many positive partnerships during these 6 years, with the council, Department of Work and Pensions, local colleges and employers, and with them will look to see how this service could be supported into the future.

The charity has a number of assets, the use of which we intend to review to ensure that we are fit for purpose, reduce overhead where possible, and plough funds into service delivery. This may include possible consolidation of the Charity's office bases, sharing of space with other charities, encouraging more off base working, and adjustments to lease arrangements to benefit the charity. The review of assets will be conducted alongside a critical look at our administrative overhead to ensure that as much of our revenue is spent on direct services.

Some of the decisions taken have already directly impacted on our clients and their families and we are aware that many of our staff have had to have difficult conversations with parents and carers. As the main provider of playschemes and clubs for disabled children and young people, we will continue to offer reliable and rewarding services but will need to be increasingly creative as funding available decreases in real terms.

We know that our staff are our major asset and supporting them over this year will be vital. We will continue to offer training and regular dialogue with senior staff and team leaders to ensure that they are kept informed and able to express their views directly to trustees. The response of our staff to the challenges that Enable Ability faces has been positive and at times inspiring, demonstrating the commitment that all involved with Enable Ability have to supporting disabled people in the best way we can.

This year will see the retirement of Richard Soutar, our longstanding manager. Richard has seen the charity through difficult periods as well as times of growth and we are very pleased that he is committed to continue to support the charity, albeit in a different way into the future. Richard's knowledge and contacts are too valuable to lose! We are fortunate that Julie Nethercote, currently manager of most children's services, will be leading all services as Operations Manager, and providing continuity for staff through this challenging time.

Finally, I would like to introduce myself as Chair of Trustees. My background is as a social worker and manager with many years working with and for adults with disabilities and their families. I am very grateful to Jon Muller for the years of service he has given to Enable Ability and his promise of advice and support to me.

**Sue Coldham  
Incoming  
Chair of Trustees**





## Special thanks to:

Abri Housing/Kieran Jones  
 Anglo Bangla  
 Apex Direct Mail  
 Autek CIC/Steve Bond  
 BBC Children in Need  
 BBC Radio Solent  
 BH Live  
 Bingo Bango  
 Buckland Hub  
 Building Integrated Services (above)  
 Charles Dickens Centre  
 Connors Toy Libraries  
 Councillors Cal Corkery, Yinka Adeniran,  
 Rajah Ghosh  
 Denmead Church Flower Club  
 DEOS Group  
 Edward Gostling Foundation  
 Folks in Harmony Choir  
 8th Girl's Brigade, Portsmouth  
 Giselle Dance Academy  
 Great South Run Runners  
 Hampshire Chamber of Commerce  
 Hampshire County Council  
 Havant Lottery  
 Havant & South Downs College  
 Hayling Golf Club  
 Jamies Recycling CIC  
 JobCentre Plus and the DWP  
 John Pounds Centre  
 Keppel's Head Hotel  
 KSM Telecom  
 Lady Hamilton PH/ Jeanette Warren  
 Lidl Community Fund  
 Mr A Norris  
 Mr Williams  
 Milton Arms PH  
 Miss G Events  
 Stephen Morgan MP  
 Morelands Primary School

Morrison's Anchorage Park  
 Morrison's Victory Park  
 Ms F Mort  
 My Generation Music Scene  
 One Box of Fudge  
 Paulsgrove Community Centre  
 Peter Ashley Activity Centre  
 Peter Harrison Foundation  
 Pompey in the Community  
 Portchester Community School  
 Portsmouth City Council  
 Portsmouth Guildhall  
 Portsmouth Lottery/ Portsmouth Lottery  
 Players  
 Portsmouth Party Hire & Events  
 Portsmouth Property Association  
 Potters House Church  
 Premier Group  
 Radis Care  
 Red Funnel Ferries  
 Rotary Club of Portsmouth & Southsea  
 Sam O'Neil  
 Shaping Portsmouth  
 Southsea Skiffle Orchestra  
 Southern Co-Op  
 Southsea Castle Rotary Club  
 SPARK Community Space  
 The Stacey Centre  
 Stansted House  
 Starbucks Burrfields Road  
 Staunton Country Park  
 Tesco Bursledon  
 Tesco Fratton/ Tesco Stronger Starts  
 Community Fund  
 The Big Lottery Community Fund  
 The HIVE, Portsmouth  
 The Lord Fitzclarence PH  
 The Old Customs House PH, Gunwharf  
 The Partnerships Foundation

T Sherrad and Veolia colleagues  
 The Southsea Belles  
 TRACO UK Ltd  
 University of Portsmouth  
 Victorious Festival  
 Village Hotel, Portsmouth  
 VIVID Housing Association  
 Zurich Community Trust

## Patrons

The Bishop of Portsmouth  
 The Lord Mayor of Portsmouth  
 Dame Penny Mordaunt DBE  
 Fred Dinenage MBE  
 Dr Caroline Williams  
 Tom and Nikki Coles  
 Joseph Harbour (from 10/24)

## Trustees (2024 -25)

Mrs K Blomerus  
 Mrs A Bowie  
 Mr A Bowie  
 Mrs S Coldham (Co-Chair)  
 Mr S Elsom (Vice Chair)  
 Mr J Harbour (retired 9/24)  
 Mr W John  
 Mr J Muller (Co-Chair)  
 Mr D Ramsay (Vice Chair)  
 Mr P Robertson  
 Mr M Thomas

## Company Secretary

Richard Soutar

*As a charity Enable Ability's activities are dependent upon funding from trusts, donors, grants and fees; we are always appreciative of all donations and any fundraising carried out on our behalf.*

## Get in touch

311-313 Copnor Road, Portsmouth  
 Hampshire, PO3 5EG



023 9267 1846



enquiries@enableability.org.uk



www.enableability.org.uk



@enableability



working with disabled people

Charity Registration: 276422  
 Company No: 1405937



Supported by



Portsmouth  
 CITY COUNCIL

www.enableability.org.uk