



Services & Impact

2024/25



Creating change **together**

Imago Community is a social action charity offering a wide range of support services for people of all ages across Kent, East Sussex, Medway and London.

Our services focus on improving health and wellbeing, reducing isolation, and ensuring everyone can access the help they need to thrive.

In 2024, we proudly celebrated **60 years** of making a difference. Today, our work continues to empower thousands of people to create positive change and build stronger communities.

www.imago.community

Message from our Chief Executive

Welcome to our Impact Report!

We highlight Imago's continuing support to vulnerable people and communities, focusing our resources, expertise and experience to meet continuing challenges such as the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, poor mental and physical health and unpaid caring, along with the social isolation and loneliness felt by many in our communities.

We embrace a model of co-production that underpins our commitment to social action. Working closely with clients, funders and partners we focus on **creating change together** - building the strengths and opportunities of people and communities, supporting them to overcome barriers, gain confidence, grow and live independently.

As you will see, during 2024/25, we supported over 30,000 children, young people and adults across **24 different local authorities** in the South East. Our dedicated staff team supporting people in their homes, the local community, in schools, hospitals, GP surgeries and leisure centres. Our commitment to collaboration is highlighted by our consistent investment in working closely with local authority, NHS, charitable trust and business partners. Our commitment to innovation is delivered through piloting and evaluating new services to respond to changing needs.

Enjoy!
Caroline Shaw MBE



Our year in numbers



30,588

people supported
(adults and children)
57% with a long-term
health condition

We worked with
**24 local
authorities**



804

Christmas gifts
donated and
distributed to
young carers



We saved families
£2,523,400
by issuing Kent Travel
Savers to young carers



**100 miles
walked**

in 24 hours across
Kent in epic Super60
fundraising challenges



3,283
dedicated staff
training hours



3,296

social and wellbeing
events for over 55s
living in Kent

218 amazing
people supported
Imago services as
volunteers

About us

Imago is a leading charity dedicated to strengthening communities and improving lives across the South East.

Our vision is **creating change together**. We work with people of all ages, providing practical support and creating opportunities that make a real difference.

Our services focus on:

- improving health and wellbeing for some of the most vulnerable in our communities,
- delivering high quality services with consistency and care,
- creating opportunities to reduce isolation and maintain independence,
- ensuring people can access the support they need,
- working together – with those we support, our communities, our partners, and the wider sector to make a positive difference.

We believe in collaboration, compassion, and action. Every day, our dedicated staff team works alongside partners and funders to deliver innovative solutions that respond to local needs.

Together, we're making life better for thousands of people.



Our reach

Supporting and connecting people and communities across the South East with services in Kent, East Sussex, Medway, and London.





Support for adults and carers enabling independence and wellbeing

Carer support that makes a difference

We believe carers should be visible, valued and supported. Carers play a vital role in our communities, and we are committed to ensuring they receive the recognition and support they deserve. Last year, we provided vital support to thousands of unpaid adult carers, helping them to manage the challenges of caring while maintaining their own wellbeing.

Through our dedicated **Carer Support** services in **North Kent** (Dartford, Gravesham, Swanley, Swale), **Lewisham** and the **City of London**, we offered practical information and advice, carers assessments and emergency planning alongside wellbeing and social activities that helped carers feel less alone.

Our **Young Adult Carers** (YAC) programme gave 16–25 year olds the support to balance caring responsibilities with education, work, and social life, reducing isolation and building confidence.

We champion co-production through regular feedback, active participation in **Carers Forums**, and representation on our **Adult Shadow Board**, ensuring carers' voices shape our services.

6,416

unpaid carers supported
across North Kent

1,586

unpaid carers supported
across Lewisham and the
City of London

“

It was a lovely few hours spent at the group today enjoying life and not being a carer. I feel less alone and more confident knowing there's support when I need it.
Sharon, unpaid carer

Community and Wellbeing Navigation

connecting people to support

In 2024/25, our Community Navigation teams supported **over 11,000 people** across **North Kent** and **Medway** to improve wellbeing and stay connected. Our navigators listened to individual needs and provided tailored guidance, helping people to access financial advice, maintain and adapt their homes, build social networks, and find local services that improve health and wellbeing.



Wellbeing Navigators worked alongside hospital teams in Darent Valley Hospital and Medway Maritime Hospital to support **1,785 patients** after discharge, ensuring they had the right care and community connections. By bridging the gap between hospital and home, we reduced the risk of readmission.

These services helped people regain independence, build confidence, and feel part of their community.

“I have had a stroke, so communicating is an issue, the navigator was understanding and patient. She listened to me and gave me time to think and speak.

Richard, Wellbeing Navigation Client

98%

of clients reported improved levels of wellbeing

Social Prescribing

Working in Primary Care Networks in **North Kent, Medway and Sheppey**, our Social Prescribing service supported **1,424 adults and children** to improve their wellbeing by connecting them to non-medical help in their community.

We identified what mattered most to individuals and linked them to practical support such as housing and financial advice, as well as social activities, volunteering opportunities, emotional wellbeing services and physical activities.

This personalised approach reduced isolation, built confidence, and helped people take positive steps towards a healthier, more connected life.

Specialised support in East Sussex

We worked closely with schools to identify young people who need help regulating their emotions and behaviour, providing one-to-one support and activities that would benefit the family to create a positive environment.

Long Covid Support

We supported people in **Kent** living with Long Covid through personalised guidance and peer support, helping individuals manage symptoms, regain confidence, and feel less isolated.

92%

of families reported improved wellbeing as a direct result of our support in East Sussex

“I just wanted to say thank you for all your support and for checking in with me. I felt like I had a safety net.

Lucy, Social Prescribing Client

Keeping people connected

Befriending services

Our service in **Dartford, Gravesham, Swanley and Swale** helped to reduce loneliness and isolation for some of the most vulnerable in our community. Volunteer befrienders provided regular phone calls to **187 people**, offering companionship and a listening ear to those who needed it most.

Social activities

2,049 adults aged 55+ and 18+ with complex needs were supported to stay active, connected, and engaged through our **Wellbeing Matters Plus** service. Working with a wide range of local charity groups and partners in **Ashford, Canterbury, and Swale**, including Age UK, Food Friends and Tenterden Social Hub, we offered creative, physical, outdoor, and social activities inspired by the six ways to wellbeing - helping people keep learning, stay active, connect with others and enjoy life.

CAMEO project (Come and Meet Each Other)

Offered a 12-week programme of inclusive social events and trips, from creative workshops and museum visits to coastal outings. These activities gave people the chance to meet others in a relaxed setting, reduce isolation, and build confidence.

Community Transport

Dial2Drive, Imago's community transport service provided **6,207 safe, reliable journeys** for people who would otherwise struggle to get out and about in **West Kent**. We supported individuals to attend medical appointments, social activities, and complete essential errands, helping them stay independent and connected. Our dedicated volunteer drivers ensured every journey was more than a trip; it was a lifeline that reduced isolation and improved wellbeing.



“
I had a wonderful experience and made some lovely friends. Every week was something different and I thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience.
Susan, CAMEO participant

Imago in action

Social Prescribing

Social prescribing starts with a conversation. Our social prescribers listen, understand individual situations and provide practical and emotional support, connecting people to services and activities that can improve health and wellbeing. Many things affect how we feel, and social prescribing helps people take control of their lives beyond medical care.

When Sarah was referred to Imago's Social Prescribing service by her GP, she was struggling with mental health difficulties and severe isolation linked to domestic abuse. During a holistic assessment, it became clear she faced multiple challenges, including coercive control, physical and financial abuse, and long-term health concerns.

With Sarah's consent, our Social Prescriber coordinated support from local services, including domestic abuse charities, housing teams, and food banks. Regular one-to-one meetings outside the home helped her feel safe, build confidence, and access the help she needed. Working together with Oasis, SATEDA and Medway Council Housing Team, we arranged a safe relocation and supported her to re-engage with her GP regarding her health concerns.

Today, Sarah is living in a safe home, is financially stable, and attends community groups. Her mental health has improved significantly, and she enjoys regular visits with her children.

Sarah's story shows how personalised, joined-up support can transform lives.



Hospital Navigation

Our Hospital Navigation service supports patients during and after discharge, helping them overcome practical challenges and regain independence. By working closely with hospital teams and community services, we ensure people have the right care and connections for a safe recovery.

When Diane was admitted to Medway Maritime Hospital, she faced significant challenges. Living alone in an uninhabitable property and struggling with self-neglect following bereavement, she felt overwhelmed and isolated. With her consent, our Care Navigator coordinated a plan involving her sister, hospital teams, and local services.

We arranged a deep clean and pest control for her home, referred her to counselling through Mind, and explored social activities to rebuild confidence, including a local painting course she was excited to join. Throughout her stay, regular conversations helped Diane feel supported and optimistic about a fresh start.



Diane is preparing to return to a safe home, start counselling, and reconnect with her community.

"This has given me a brand new outlook on life, I am ready to go back out there! Thank you"

Diane's experience highlights how collaboration across hospital teams, community partners, and tailored one-to-one support can lead to safer discharges, improved wellbeing, and positive long-term outcomes.

Support for children and young people helping young people to thrive

Young carers

In 2024/25, our Young Carers Services supported over **12,900 children** and young people aged 5-18 who care for a family member with an illness, disability, mental health condition or substance misuse problem. Many young carers don't see themselves as carers and miss out on getting the help they need. We aim to ensure young carers have access to support, and know they are not alone.

We delivered services across **Kent, East Sussex, Bexley, Havering, Lewisham, Greenwich, and Southwark**, providing practical help and emotional support to reduce isolation, improve wellbeing, and help young people balance their caring responsibilities.

Our teams offered one-to-one guidance, group activities, and fun respite opportunities, giving young carers the chance to take a break, build friendships, and develop confidence. From fun days out and creative workshops to skills sessions and wellbeing support, we created safe spaces where young carers could relax and feel understood.

We also worked closely with schools and families to ensure young carers received the recognition and support they needed to thrive.

97%

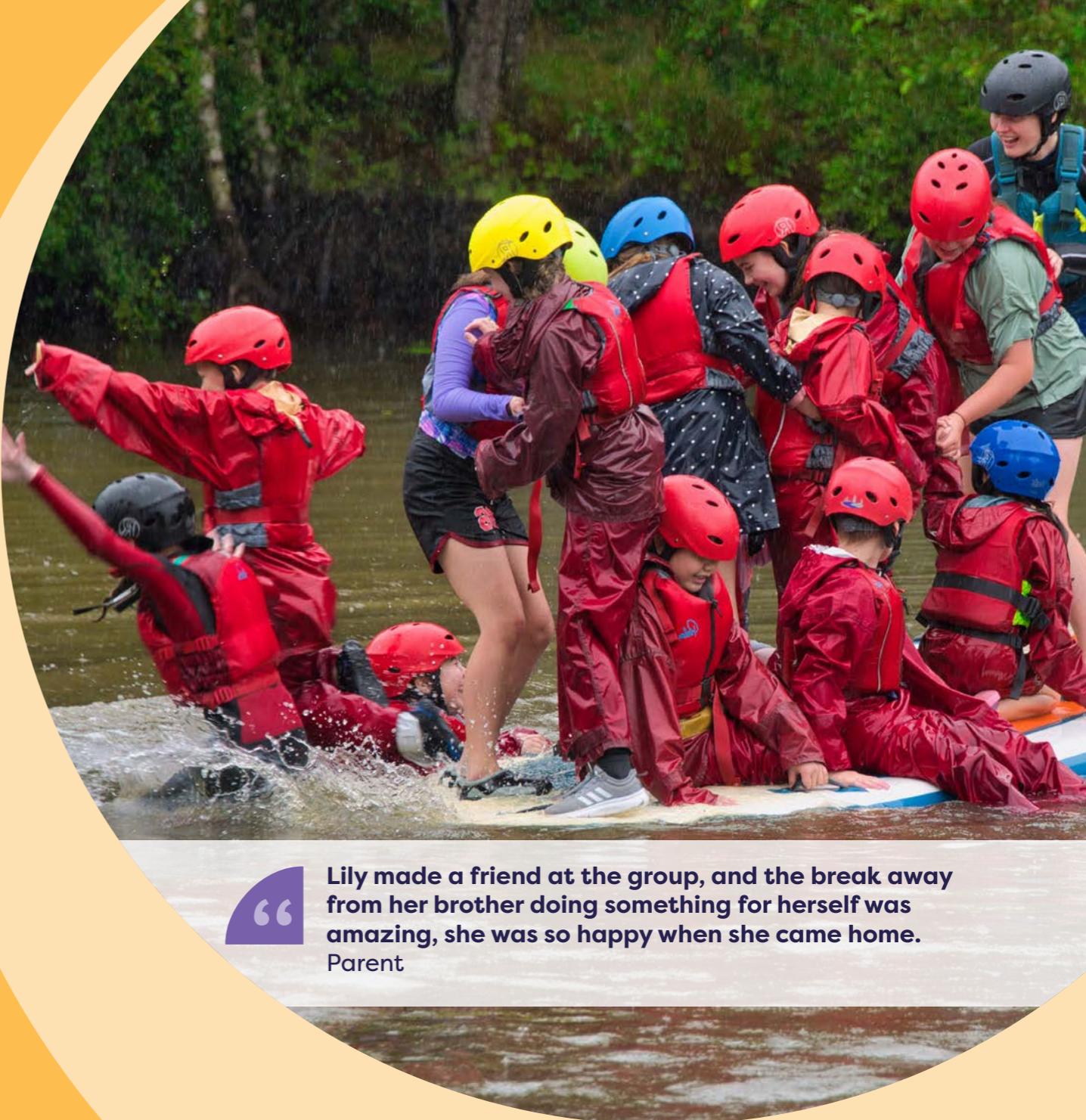
of young carers reported improved wellbeing from our support

961

professionals accessed our free young carers awareness training

18,927

students learnt about young carers through 86 awareness assemblies



Lily made a friend at the group, and the break away from her brother doing something for herself was amazing, she was so happy when she came home.

Parent



Promoting inclusivity and supporting wellbeing

Children with disabilities

We supported **474 disabled young people** and their families through our **Short Breaks** service, providing over **662 inclusive activities** including holiday and weekend clubs and family days in Kent, giving children the chance to enjoy new experiences in a safe and supportive environment.

These sessions offered creative workshops, outdoor activities, and opportunities to build friendships and develop new skills, while families benefited from feeling connected, supported and included.

90%

of families commented they had fun, felt safe and had the opportunity to try new things

Youth mental health and emotional wellbeing

We supported young people in **Kent** facing emotional and mental health challenges through one-to-one guidance, group sessions, assemblies, and wellbeing activities generously funded through trusts and foundations. Our services focused on supporting key transitions, building resilience, reducing isolation, and helping young people feel heard and supported.

Your voice

Young people influence everything we do through regular feedback opportunities and participation in our **Youth Shadow Board**, ensuring children and young people have a real voice in shaping services that matter to them.

“These days mean so much to us as a family. The support provided allows us quality time while providing a safe environment for our son.

Parent

Imago in action

Young carers

Our young carers service supports children and young people who care for a family member, helping them balance responsibilities with opportunities to enjoy life and develop confidence.

Michael, 15, cares for his younger sister who has complex needs, including autism and chronic health conditions. His caring role is demanding; helping her to get ready, calming her when she gets frustrated, and ensuring she has what she needs for her emotional wellbeing. This leaves little time for himself or social activities, and he often misses out on experiences other teenagers enjoy.

Michael's love of archery was sparked when he attended our Young Carer Festival at Bowles Outdoor Centre, where he tried archery for the first time.

Through a grant for a beginner's course and equipment, applied for by his support coordinator, Michael was able to join a local archery club, and this opportunity gave him respite from his caring role and improved his wellbeing. He quickly progressed, achieving multiple records and winning competitions at club level. Archery has helped him build confidence and feel part of something beyond his caring responsibilities.

As his mum told us: "**Michael finally has something to do away from his sister that makes him happy. He feels like he belongs.**"

Michael continues to thrive at the club, developing new skills and friendships while maintaining his caring role at home. His story shows how tailored support and opportunities can transform the lives of young carers.



Short breaks for disabled young people

Our Short Breaks programme in Kent gives children and young people with disabilities the chance to enjoy new experiences, build confidence and develop friendships in a safe, supportive environment.

When Adam was referred to Short Breaks, he was anxious but excited about the activities he might join. A home visit from our support coordinator and a visual timetable helped Adam feel more comfortable about upcoming trips, and shortly after the home visit, mum reported that he went online to look up the RAF museum we were due to visit and was excited to see the old war planes.

Adam started attending Saturday Clubs in Ashford, and since then he has flourished, making friends, improving his social skills and even meeting up with peers outside the service.



His parents have noticed a big change. Adam struggles to retain information, but he now looks forward to activities, remembers dates, and counts down the days. He has become more independent, taking on chores to earn pocket money for trips and saving for treats in the gift shops.

Adam is a changed boy since coming to your activities, thank you.
Mum

Support for charities and community groups to grow, adapt and thrive

In 2024/25, with funding from Kent County Council's Infrastructure Support Fund, we worked alongside **151 charities and community groups** in six Kent districts to strengthen their foundations and build resilience.

Our infrastructure support included advice on governance, funding, and compliance, as well as practical help with policies and safeguarding and networking opportunities.

By offering tailored guidance and training, we enabled organisations to adapt, grow, and deliver high-quality services to their communities.

“Thank you again for your incredible support. We are already benefiting from your guidance, and I’m excited to continue working with you to strengthen our foundation.

Thrive Together

We continued to connect charities and community groups in West Kent with volunteers through our dedicated **volunteer recruitment service**. By promoting opportunities and matching individuals to roles that suit their skills and interests, we helped organisations expand their capacity and deliver more impact.

This collaborative approach ensured volunteers felt valued while supporting vital services across **Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells**.



Building awareness and support

Community fundraising

In 2024/25, we proudly celebrated our 60th anniversary with the Super 60 fundraising campaign, bringing together individuals, businesses, and communities to raise vital funds for our services. From epic 60km walks to creative projects like 60 origami butterflies crafted by a young supporter, the campaign raised **over £3,000**, helping us mark this milestone while making a real difference.



Local groups and individuals

continued to organise events, take on challenges, and make donations to support our work, and we are incredibly grateful for every contribution. We strengthened partnerships with corporate supporters, including Birketts LLP, and distributed **804 gifts** from corporate appeals such as Dunelm, KFMF, and Bluewater Giving Tree to young carers at Christmas.

“ Birketts LLP, Sevenoaks office is proud to be supporting Imago Community this year. We hope by supporting the charity, we as a firm can help expand the fantastic opportunities which Imago provide to as many children and young carers in Kent, East Sussex and South London as possible.

Vanda, Partner at Birketts LLP



Our volunteers

Volunteers remained at the heart of Imago, with **218 individuals** giving their time, energy, and enthusiasm to support our services, including in our Charity Shop and Dial2Drive, or with other charities in West Kent.

Volunteers benefited from their experiences by improving emotional wellbeing, building confidence, enhancing their CVs, and connecting with others.

“ Volunteering has given me a purpose, I like to feel I am making a difference and it has given me confidence in other areas of my life.

James, Imago volunteer



Raising awareness

We marked Carers Week, Carers Rights Day and Young Carers Action Day with engaging events across our delivery areas and online campaigns, bringing people together, celebrating carers and their contributions, and championing their rights.

A fresh look

In 2024/25, we refreshed our brand and launched a new website to strengthen our identity and improve how we connect with communities. Our social media reach grew to over **333,000 people**, helping us share stories and raise awareness of the support we provide.

Our quality and memberships

Our quality accreditations ensure we continue to work to the highest possible standards across our services.



Investors in People: demonstrates our commitment to employees, strong leadership, a compelling vision and a culture of improvement



ISO 9001: demonstrates structured and efficient services and programmes ensuring consistency and quality



ISO 14001: demonstrates our environmental responsibility, commitment to raising awareness, and reducing waste and carbon emissions



SSIP (safety schemes in procurement): demonstrates Imago is committed to workplace health and safety; keeping staff and clients safe



Carers UK and Carer Poverty Coalition member: campaigning to end poverty amongst carers by advocating for policy change that adequately values, recognises and supports unpaid carers



Ofsted: our "Good" rating demonstrates a high-quality standard of education, training, and care



AQS: awarded to organisations that provide general advice services in the areas of social, welfare and public law. Assures the quality of the information and advice services provided



Data Security and Protection Toolkit: demonstrates our commitment to handling patient information and data securely and appropriately

Our partners and funders



Thank you

Thank you to all the individuals, businesses, trusts and foundations, and community groups who have supported us this year, enabling us to continue providing our vital work supporting vulnerable people.

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Imago provides services across
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London



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