



# *Creativity* IN CONNECTION

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Friends House  
community through caring

# OUR PURPOSE *in Action*

At Friends House, *Creativity in Connection* reflects who we are and what we nurture every day. We are a team of residents, staff, and neighbors – rooted in the heart of Sandy Spring – where creativity, belonging, and purpose come to life.

## MISSION *Statement*

Founded on Quaker values and open to seniors of all backgrounds and abilities, our mission is to build a community through caring. By connecting residents with other seniors, volunteers, and staff, we support the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being of every individual.

*“I strongly value engagement here. Every day I learn something new from conversations, activities, and committee work.”*

**– Resident, Friends House**

## VISION *Statement*

Our vision is to serve seniors and fulfill community needs in Sandy Spring, MD by welcoming older adults from diverse backgrounds to live in and enrich our community. We foster inclusion and connection among residents, families, team members, and friends while practicing smart, efficient, and sustainable land use to minimize environmental impact. Friends House preserves its spirit of diversity and responsibility by respecting the places we walk and the people who walk them.

*Simplicity • Peace • Integrity • Community • Equality • Stewardship*

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## WELCOME to the Friends House 2025 Annual Report.

This year's "Creativity in Connection" theme celebrates how imagination, purpose, and community come together to shape life at Friends House. From new creative spaces to strengthened partnerships and shared achievements, this report reflects the many ways residents, team members, and neighbors continue to build a community that inspires and connects. As one resident shared, *"Many people are drawn to Friends House because it is a place where there are lots of ways to be of service as one ages – and that's what keeps us young!"*

Thank you for being part of our story – one defined by care, creativity, and collaboration.

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# Leadership Reflections

## From the *CEO*



*Philip Burkholder*  
Chief Executive Officer

Dear Friends House Community,

As I reflect on this past year, I am grateful for the energy and creativity that shape daily life at Friends House. Together, we have celebrated milestones that speak to the strength of our community. From the joy of the Annual Fall Festival to the inspiration of the Wellness Expo and the warmth of our Donor Appreciation gatherings, each moment has shown how meaningful it is to come together.

We are also looking ahead to new possibilities. While plans are still in their early stages, our vision for expansion is rooted in a simple idea: to create more opportunities for others to experience the purposeful lifestyle our residents enjoy. By planning carefully and staying true to our values, we hope to extend the Friends House way of life to more older adults in the future.

This year has also highlighted the importance of our place in Sandy Spring and Montgomery County. Through partnerships, events, and collaborations, we have continued to strengthen our role as both neighbor and contributor in the wider community.

As we move forward, I remain inspired by the creativity, care, and connection I see every day at Friends House.

*“What makes Friends House remarkable is not just the buildings or the programs, but the people – residents, team, and neighbors – who bring this community to life.” – Philip Burkholder*

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. Together, we will continue building on the legacy of Friends House as a place where creativity and connection flourish.

Warm regards,  
Philip Burkholder  
Chief Executive Officer





## From the *COO*



*Kadine Mitchell*  
*Chief Operating Officer*

Dear Friends House Community,

This year, I had the privilege of stepping into the role of Chief Operating Officer. Serving seniors has always been close to my heart – I grew up in nursing homes, volunteering alongside my mother who has been a Certified Nursing Assistant for more than 40 years. Those early experiences taught me the value of connection, compassion, and the simple joy of being present with others.

Since joining Friends House as Director of Healthcare Services in 2023, I've seen the unique spirit of this community shine through in so many ways – from the creativity of residents, to the dedication of our team, to the sense of belonging that defines daily life here. As COO, my focus is on strengthening healthcare and wellness services, supporting the team who makes this place thrive, and helping ensure that Friends House continues to be a community where every person can flourish.

I am honored to continue this journey with you, and I look forward to building on our shared values of care, connection, and creativity.

Warmly,  
Kadine Mitchell  
Chief Operating Officer

## From the *Clerk of the Board*



*Tom Gibian*  
*Clerk of the Board*

Dear Friends,

If Friends House didn't already exist, we would have to create it. Friends House is a retirement community where residents, staff and friends seek to see the light within each person, to steward the beautiful campus, to model belonging and inclusivity, to be lifelong learners, to share creative impulses, to discover new gifts, to let their lives speak. We value our community for its independence, its Quaker values, its strong sense of community and for its insistence on being resident-centered.

We are proud of our history and excited about our future as, together, we learn to be a place that transforms the experience of aging.

With appreciation,  
Tom Gibian  
Clerk of the Board

# *Life in Motion*

## Creativity, Connection, and Community

### *A Habitat That Nurtures Life*

This year, Friends House was officially recognized as a **Certified Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation**, honoring nearly six decades of eco-conscious living. The community was also designated a **Homegrown National Park** for its ongoing efforts to restore native ecosystems across campus. Residents and team members have planted trees, expanded pollinator gardens, reimaged the community garden, and created bird-friendly landscapes. With more than 60 residents serving on the Environment Committee, stewardship here is community-led. From recording over 185 bird species with Cornell's Haikubox to welcoming local students for pond ecology lessons, Friends House continues to be a place where people and nature thrive together.

### *Connections Across Generations*

Friends House life is enriched by young people from Sandy Spring. This year, residents welcomed students, volunteers, and grandchildren who joined in the Fall Festival, fished in the pond, learned woodworking, and participated in resident interviews as part of a **Sandy Spring Friends School** project. These experiences spark joy, strengthen relationships, and remind us that connection spans every generation.

That legacy is also reflected in our staff – many have served here for years, and some even have adult children who now work at Friends House, too.

As one resident shared in a recent survey: *"Life here is stimulating and fun... there's no reason to be lonely. We all help each other when needed."*

At Friends House, life is always in motion. Residents, staff, and neighbors shape a community where creativity, purpose, and connection come alive every day. From environmental achievements to new creative spaces and intergenerational programs, 2025 was a year of growth, collaboration, and inspiration.

*“Participating in these community art activities stimulates the brain... and can help alleviate perhaps the most significant deterrent to successful aging, namely social isolation.”*

– Nancy Lark

## The Value of Art

When asked to name the highlight of her year at Friends House, **Nancy Lark, clerk of the ArtSpace committee** (who goes by “Lark”), responded immediately: *“It was the dedication of the new studio!”*

Since opening in January, the ArtSpaces studio and workshop have quickly become places where residents gather to create and connect. Watercolor drop-ins, Saturday sketching, and hands-on workshops in collage, nature photography, and papier-mâché offer not only creative expression but also companionship.

One participant joked he hadn’t colored like this since kindergarten. Judy Farquhar, who leads the sketching classes, says, *“Drawing lets you set aside worries and stressful thoughts and just focus on the task at hand.”* Lark adds, *“Participating in these community art activities stimulates the brain, and can help alleviate perhaps the most significant deterrent to successful aging, namely social isolation.”*

The WoodShop also extends the idea of art into community service. Residents repair furniture and create items for fundraisers, while mentoring students from Sandy Spring Friends School. Together, they built accessible garden beds for the community plots – a joint project with lasting purpose.



# Growing Together

## Wellness & Engagement:

### Ward's Story

Resident Judy Farquhar recently spoke with **Ward Burton**, a retired biochemist, about the many organized activities he enjoys at Friends House. Ward stays active with exercise programs like Qigong, Bone Builders, and flexibility sessions, and also joins in board games, croquet, tours, and evening movies in the Miller Center.

He contributes in service as well – from helping set up for Quaker Meeting to attending Seniors Association gatherings. Reflecting on these experiences, Ward shares: *“I think I’m more outgoing since I moved here to Friends House... My health has improved, too. Eating in the dining room, my diet has improved. I have more vegetables, and don’t rely so much on fast food.”*

He adds: *“Everything is run by volunteers, and we all benefit from the camaraderie of doing things together... This is a very accepting environment. Unlike the work environment, there’s no pressure here, and that’s good for all of us.”*



## Dining & Services Collaboration

At Friends House, food is about more than nourishment – it’s a way to build community. **Dining Services Director Jason Rosewag** and his team bring creativity and care to every gathering. From BBQ and sides at the Fall Festival, to smoothies at the Wellness Expo, to Jason’s signature banana bread baked as a welcome gift for new residents, the dining team helps create moments that bring people together.



*“I think I’m more outgoing since I moved here to Friends House... My health has improved, too. Eating in the dining room, my diet has improved.”*

– Ward Burton, Resident



## *Environmental & Horticultural Heritage*

Friends House is rooted in the land and history of Sandy Spring, a community long recognized for its horticultural traditions. That connection stretches back to the early years, when local Quakers envisioned a retirement community alongside Sandy Spring Friends School.

As neighbor and farmer **Tom Farquhar** recalls:

*“Before Friends House was established, I ran cross-country for Sherwood High School, frequently crossing the large fields behind Norwood House and southeast of the Quaker meeting house. Regional Quakers were actively planning an adjacent retirement community with nursing services... the early Friends House had an immediate impact on the Sandy Spring Community. It has been a pleasure for me, living next door, to observe the vigorous growth and flourishing of this community.”*

For Tom, the connection is also personal. His parents both enjoyed excellent care as residents of Friends House, a reminder of the deep bonds between Friends House and its neighbors. Today, that bond continues – many residents stop at his family’s farm stand by the community entrance, keeping alive the neighbor-to-neighbor ties that have long defined Sandy Spring.

Residents and team members carry on that legacy by tending gardens, planting native species, and nurturing pollinator habitats that strengthen both Friends House and the wider community.

**4+**

*weekly fitness programs*

**4**

*signature events powered by Dining Services*

**DOZENS**

*of native plantings added this year*

# Rooted in Our Community

**Celebrating Together:**

## *Wellness Expo & Fall Festival*

The year began with the **Wellness Expo**, an event that brought residents, team members, and local providers together – including our close health partner, MedStar Montgomery Medical Center – to share resources and promote well-being. From fitness demonstrations to healthy snacks prepared by the Dining team, the Expo highlighted the power of collaboration in supporting health and connection for older adults and families alike.

Later in the year, the **Fall Festival** welcomed neighbors, families, and friends from the Sandy Spring area for a day filled with BBQ, music, and activities for all ages. Resident creativity, team support, and volunteer energy combined to create a celebration that has quickly become a beloved community tradition.



Friends House is more than a place to live – it is part of Sandy Spring. For nearly six decades, our residents, team, and neighbors have worked side by side to build connections that extend beyond our campus. Through partnerships, shared celebrations, and the support of local businesses, Friends House continues to be a trusted neighbor and valued partner.



## Community Partnerships

Both the Expo and Festival thrive because of the commitment of local sponsors, businesses, and volunteers. Their support provides the resources needed to host these large gatherings and ensures they remain open and welcoming to all. Friends House also proudly sponsors **Olney's National Night Out** each year, standing alongside neighbors, first responders, and local organizations to strengthen safety and community ties. These efforts reflect Friends House's role as a partner not only in Sandy Spring but across Montgomery County.

***"We love the warm heart of Friends House – a community where neighbors support one another – and we're grateful to be part of events like the Expo and Fall Festival."***

– Magnolia Dentistry

From long-standing partnerships to new collaborations, Friends House continues to strengthen its role as both neighbor and contributor. Our ties with Sandy Spring are a reminder that creativity and connection grow stronger when shared.

**2**

*major community  
events hosted  
annually*

**OVER 50**

*local sponsors  
and volunteers  
engaged*

**1 MISSION**

*connecting  
Friends House with  
Sandy Spring*

# *Living Inclusion Every Day*

## *Community in Action*


Diversity and inclusion took a meaningful step forward this year with the launch of the **Pathways Program**, which provides support for team members pursuing important personal milestones. This new initiative adds to the sense of belonging and shared opportunity that defines life at Friends House.

## *Celebrations That Connect Us*

From monthly socials and cultural events to staff appreciation days, Friends House thrives on moments that bring people together. This year also featured **Drumming for Diversity**, a lively event that invited residents, team members, and neighbors to connect through rhythm and shared experience. Whether through music, food, or laughter, these gatherings deepen relationships and make inclusion something felt – not just spoken about.

## *Building Together*

Community-building here is ongoing. Resident committees, collaborative projects, and team-led initiatives all create opportunities for engagement. These efforts ensure that everyone has a voice and that the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion remain part of the daily fabric of Friends House.



*“We welcome people of all backgrounds and we are all treated as equals.”*

– Resident, Friends House

*“Friends House has given me a sense of belonging and purpose.”*

– Resident, Friends House



# *Creativity in Everyday Life*

## *ArtSpaces Studio: A New Beginning*

The year began with the ribbon-cutting of the **ArtSpaces Studio**, made possible by a \$25,000 grant from the Friends Foundation for the Aging, along with generous gifts from residents and friends. Since its opening, the studio has been alive with energy – watercolor drop-ins, sketching classes, collage workshops, and nature photography gatherings have brought residents and team members together to explore new skills and connect through creativity.

As committee clerk Nancy “Lark” Lark reflects:

*“Not everyone can be a great artist, but, when given the opportunity to explore art, everyone can express themselves and create something meaningful in the process.”*

– Nancy Lark, Resident

## *The Woodshop: Crafting Community*

The **Woodshop** is another hub where creativity flourishes. More experienced woodworkers teach safe tool use, repair furniture for neighbors, and create handcrafted walking sticks, cutting boards, and shoehorns. These items are shared with the community at events throughout the year, transforming creativity into gifts that strengthen connection.

The Woodshop also reaches beyond Friends House. This past spring, several woodworkers partnered with Sandy Spring Friends School students completing community service hours. Together, they built two accessible, table-height garden beds for the community plots – a joint achievement with lasting purpose.

*“Not everyone can be a great artist, but, when given the opportunity to explore art, everyone can express themselves and create something meaningful in the process.”*

– Nancy Lark, Resident



## Looking Ahead

More opportunities for creativity are on the horizon. **The Model Train Room** and **Textile Studio**, still in development, will soon open as new spaces for residents and team members to explore passions, share skills, and collaborate. These future hubs reflect the ongoing vision of Friends House: creating places where creativity connects us and community continues to grow.

The **Friends Foundation for the Aging** shares in that vision. As Executive Director Susan Hoskins noted, “FFA is pleased to support the art room and garden at Friends House. These spaces have become community gathering areas for residents throughout the campus – places for connecting, building community, spiritual deepening, healing, creative expression, and finding purpose.”

**\$25,000**  
grant launched  
ArtSpaces Studio

**75**  
creative  
workshops hosted  
since January

**2**  
garden beds built  
in collaboration  
with local students



# Strength in Giving

At Friends House, generosity takes many forms – from grants and donations to the everyday acts of care that knit our community together. This year, donor support has opened new doors, strengthened vital services, and created opportunities for both residents and staff to flourish.

## *Healthcare Center Improvements*

With the support of a **\$100,000 Capital Grant from Maryland**, the Healthcare Center is undergoing improvements that enhance both comfort and care for residents. These updates reflect a commitment to dignity and quality of life for those who call Friends House home.



## *Creative Spaces Expansion*

Thanks to **\$50,000 in state funding for our ArtSpaces Program**, Friends House is expanding creativity across campus. Beyond the new Art Studio, residents will enjoy a Woodshop, Model Train Room, Textile Studio, and Pottery Studio – places designed to spark imagination, encourage collaboration, and build connection.

## *Pathways Program for Team Members*

A **\$30,000 grant from the Friends Foundation for the Aging** launched a program that provides resources and guidance for team members pursuing important personal milestones. This initiative also supports an opportunity to hire a social services designee – available to both staff and residents – strengthening our culture of inclusion and care.

# Invitation to Connect

Your generosity makes these stories possible. Together, we are shaping a Friends House where creativity, inclusion, and connection continue to grow stronger every day.

**We invite you to be part of this journey:**

**VISIT**  
*our campus*

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**VOLUNTEER**  
*your time*


---

**DONATE**  
*to support our mission*

---

**PARTICIPATE**  
*in the life of our community*

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*“There is a welcoming family-like feeling here. I really wouldn’t want to live anywhere else.”*

– Resident, Friends House

# Life, In Our Own Words

At Friends House, daily life is defined by voices that come together as one community. Residents, team members, and leaders each share perspectives on what it means to live and work in a place built on connection.

For long-time residents, Friends House offers continuity and belonging. *"I've lived at Friends House for 25 years... This is such a special place to be. We have so much interaction with people, learning about their lives and sharing about mine. It's a gift from heaven to be here,"* says **Nancy McIntyre**. That sense of belonging spans generations and backgrounds, creating bonds that last decades.

Mealtime conversations, hallway encounters, and evening programs spark friendships and deepen community. As resident **Harriett Teixeira** shared, *"When I think of all the personalities that live in this lodge and how well we get along... it's home."*

Team members echo these themes, underscoring that residents and staff are part of one shared family. In dining, **Renee Brown** reflects, *"Being out in the Bistro, serving the residents and team – that connection is what makes the work fulfilling."* And in maintenance, responsiveness stands out: *"When my A/C went out during a heatwave, the team had it repaired the very next morning – service I could never have gotten as a homeowner."*

That same spirit is reflected in leadership. After six years on the Board of Directors, **Bim Schauffler** says, *"Friends House has a unique spirit – a resilience and sense of connection that makes this community thrive."*

Together, these reflections show that Friends House is more than a place to live or work – it is a place where creativity, support, and friendship flow naturally between people.





*“This is our family, and knowing that if anything happened, somebody would be here for us. We take care of each other, we care for one another . . . this has become our family.”* – Harriett Teixeira, Resident



# Cultivating with Care

Nature is woven into the daily rhythm of Friends House. From pollinator gardens to meadows and beehives, residents and team members collaborate to make the land itself part of the community.



When **Elaine Yamada** moved into her apartment, she was captivated by the wildlife in her backyard – deer, foxes, and red-shouldered hawks among them. But the same area revealed a challenge: hillside erosion from heavy rain. Elaine and her neighbors researched solutions and decided a native-plant meadow would be best. With new funding from the Anacostia Riverkeepers, planting will begin soon. Elaine now serves on the Environment Committee, helping remove invasives and expand native habitats. *“As a burgeoning naturalist, it is a joy to be so surrounded by nature,”* she reflects.



Beekeeping has also become a symbol of connection at Friends House. **Marion Story**, who fell in love with bees at age 10, now tends hives on campus. With the help of residents, she harvested 125 pounds of honey last year and donated \$1,500 in proceeds back to the community. *“A worker bee toils tirelessly her entire lifetime, producing just 1/12th of a teaspoon of honey,”* she notes. Marion adds, *“Being a beekeeper has made me aware of how dependent we all are on insects for survival and how interconnected all animals and plants are.”* For her, tending the hives is as much about community as it is about pollinators: *“I am so thankful to have a place to pursue beekeeping and to have gotten to know, and enjoy working with, many people in this community.”*



The commitment extends to team members as well. **Dora Trapani**, an LPN in Thomas Neighborhood, shares that same passion of growing things: *“I’ve always loved flowers.”* Her joy in gardening mirrors the spirit that drives residents to nurture the land and sustain Friends House’s standing as a Certified Wildlife Habitat.

# Leadership in Community

Resident leadership is at the heart of Friends House governance. Through the **Friends House Seniors Association (FHSA)**, residents work hand-in-hand with staff and the Board to ensure every voice helps shape community priorities.

As FHSA President **Bob Dockhorn** explains: *“The Friends House Seniors Association offers a variety of activities and services to all residents. Even more importantly, it encourages strong community through many diverse and creative opportunities. Whether in the wood-working or art spaces, movies or book clubs, gardens or native plant projects, residents come together to share interests and to care for our neighborhood and the world.”*

Residents echo this value in their own words. One shared: *“FHSA programs are excellent, and we are both grateful for the activities and residents who volunteer.”* Another noted: *“FHSA provides lots of stimulation. Volunteers do a wonderful job.”*

This collaborative spirit defines decision-making at Friends House. Whether through board service, committee work, or everyday problem-solving, residents, team members, and leadership share responsibility for guiding the future. Together, they ensure that Friends House remains true to its mission while embracing the creativity and wisdom of its people.

**55**  
*resident  
activities and  
committees*

**COUNTLESS**  
*volunteers*



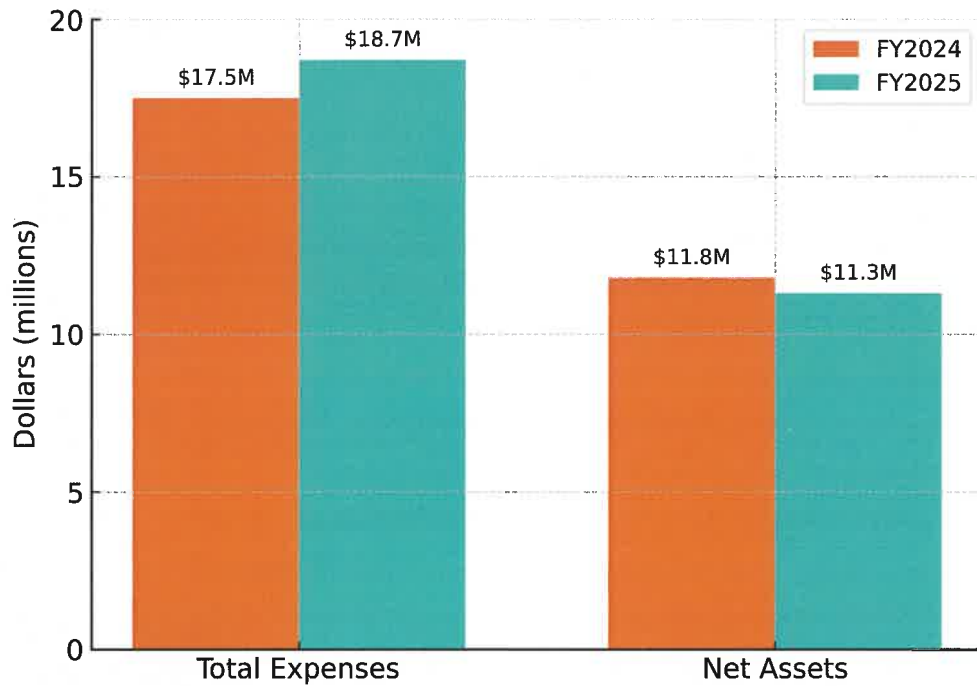
*“The Friends House Seniors Association... encourages strong community through many diverse and creative opportunities.”*

– **Bob Dockhorn, FHSA President**

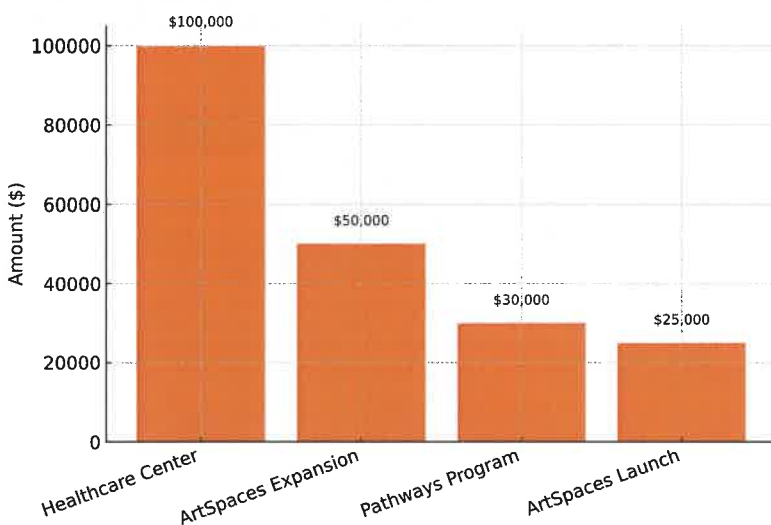


# Financial Overview: Stewardship in Action

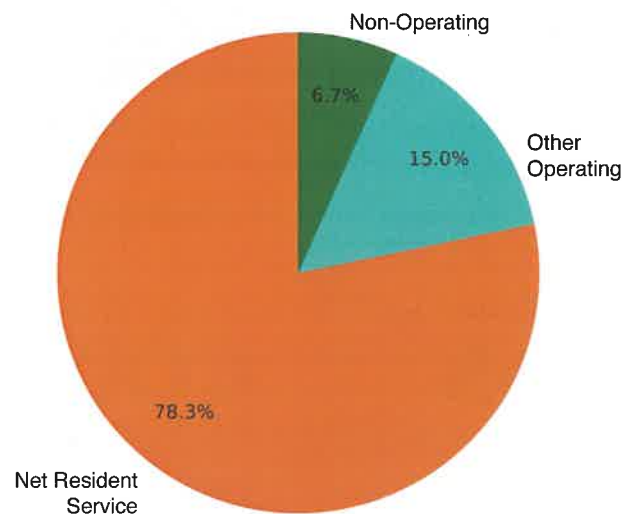
Total Expenses and Net Assets (FY2024 vs FY2025)



Capital & Grant Funding Impact (FY2025)



Revenue by Source (FY2025)



Friends House remains financially strong and mission-driven. Our 2025 results reflect continued progress in sustaining quality care, community life, and campus improvements while investing in the future. Each year, prudent management ensures that Friends House can grow responsibly and continue serving residents with stability and confidence.

*For the Friends House Board, financial stewardship is the careful and ethical management of our community's resources, guided by Quaker values of integrity, simplicity, and responsibility. We see stewardship not simply as balancing budgets, but as honoring the trust of residents, staff, and the wider community who rely on Friends House.*

*We operate in a challenging and rapidly evolving nonprofit continuing care retirement community (CCRC) environment. This requires us to be both prudent and adaptive – sustaining affordability and quality today, while preparing for the financial and regulatory realities of tomorrow.*

*Our goal is long-term health and stability for Friends House. By aligning financial decisions with mission and values, we ensure that the community can continue to thrive and serve future generations with the same spirit of care and integrity that defines us today.*

**– John Hines, Board Treasurer**



**Friends House**  
community through caring

FriendsHouse.com

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