
Age UK East Grinstead & District

Annual Report
2019 - 2020





Opened in 1974, Swan Mead Day Centre, Queens Road our home for 45 years

Origins Of Age UK East Grinstead & District

The first mention of any Charity set up to support older people within the Community, came about following the introduction of the National Assistance Act 1948 this led to the creation of the Old People’s Welfare Committee, which began supporting the vulnerable in 1951 from a rest room in St Leonard’s Hospital, Glen Vue with just 24 members. Operating on a Monday and Thursday afternoons from 2.30 pm to 4.30 pm

Leaving Swan Mead

The original charity, The Older People’s Welfare Committee moved in to the Swan Mead Centre in 1974, a purpose built building for the vulnerable older people.

In 2019, some 45 years later, Age UK East Grinstead & District moved out, after

many years of happy memories, laughter, hot lunches, tea and biscuits, entertainers and speakers. Trips and holidays, Help at Home service and even Hot meals offers delivered straight to people’s front door during the 1960’s.

It was suggested that I should get out of my home and socialize , and Age UK East Grinstead & District was recommended as being one of the best in town. So it was all arranged by my sister to go and visit the centre the very next day, just so I could not back out. The night before had a very bad night and woke with nerves on top of nerves.

My sister came with me, “make sure you smile” she said. As we entered, I remember it had a kitchen and one large lounge. I did as my sister told me, my smile glued to my face through fear! I met a couple of staff — the interview must have gone well as they asked me if I would like to become a member—I looked at my sister in blind panic, but with reassurance, signed on the dotted line and became a fully paid up member. They returned with details of the trips and holidays they could arrange—I was in shock, my nerves went into overdrive, I could not stop the giggles I could not believe they did all this. My sister and I explained that I had not been anywhere and this would all be new to me. I explained that my greatest fear would be getting lost or left behind as I do not have a very good sense of direction.

On my first day, staff were at the door greeting and helping people to their seats, I was shown to my seat and sat next to someone called Doris, who told me where things where and who was who—of course I did not remember any of them.

Since then I have been on many trips and holidays, made new friends and become a much more confident person—Oh and I have never got lost or left behind when going out.

Memories of my first few days at Swan Mead
By J (a member of Age UK East Grinstead & District)



The Glen Vue Centre., Railway Approach

Moving to our new home

Anyone who has moved house, knows how stressful this can be. Arranging for the removal company, or utilities to be read, wrapping the china, boxing up the books, furniture and then there is the garden shed. Not forgetting the House warming party— As always it is the small things that cause the most problem and any move is a real headache at the best of times.

Now, times that by ten and double it again, still does not come close to how we had to operate for the first few days and months. For example without an operational oven at Glen Vue, we had to cook meals at Swan Mead, then transfer them to Glen Vue. A great effort by our Head Chef Cliff Bates and his team.

Arrange for new suppliers, new room hires, a much larger site, so finding our own way around was a task in its own. Then arranging for an official opening by Sir Nicholas Soames MP and Cllr Danny Favor.



Activities at Glen Vue

Following our move to Glen Vue, we are now able to provide many more “active” activities, all in house.

Here are just a few examples:

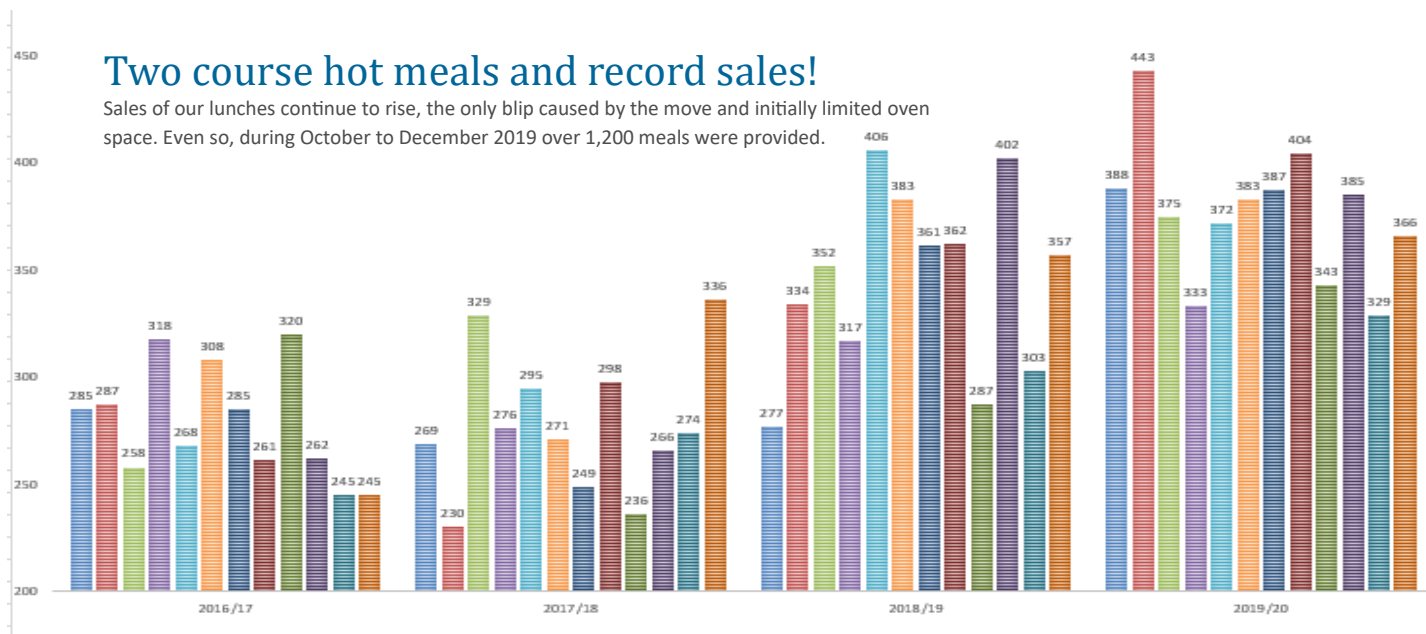
- ⇒ Tai Chi
- ⇒ Zumba Gold
- ⇒ Zumba armchair
- ⇒ Table Tennis
- ⇒ Pilates
- ⇒ Curling

With the extra space it has allowed us to review and revise our entertainment program and the entertainers who come to the centre. This includes singers and even puppets!



Two course hot meals and record sales!

Sales of our lunches continue to rise, the only blip caused by the move and initially limited oven space. Even so, during October to December 2019 over 1,200 meals were provided.



"Thank you for looking after Mum, coming to Age UK gives her something to look forward to, she could not manage on her own."

Christmas celebrations 2019

Highlights during this period included the 5 Christmas lunches which include carols from local schoolchildren, singers and entertainers, Father Christmas and several raffles.

At one sitting we had 42 people enjoying the seasonal fayre prepared by Head Chef Cliff and his team. All members and several non-members enjoyed the well organized and happy occasions.



Head Chef, Cliff Bates and Kitchen Assistant Jane Kell

New Year's Eve party

For the second year running staff volunteered to come into the centre and create a New Year's Eve party for members with over 35 people attending to sing, enjoy a buffet and good company during the morning and early afternoon of New Year's Eve day.

Active activities - Our first Tea Dance

With the new space that we now have, it creates new ideas and so, the very first afternoon "Tea dance" took place at Age UK East Grinstead & District in November 2019.

Twenty-four people attended on a Monday afternoon which gave everyone a chance to meet, socialise, and enjoy refreshments prepared by Cliff and his team, listen or even dance to some up-beat music all provided free by a new volunteer DJ.





One of the places we visited during the year Weald & Downland Living Museum

Trips, Outings and Holidays

During this financial year we have arranged several Trips, Outings and Holidays. Seven trips were arranged using transport provide by our friends from St Hill for over 120 older people allowing for the opportunity of an afternoon out from a ride on the Bluebell Railway to a meal at a local Pub .

Eight Outings were also arranged, a longer day trip away with over 180 day trippers enjoying the sights from Arundel Castle to the Weald & Downland Living Museum.

Lastly the complete breakaway with four holidays arranged from Shanklin in the Isle of Wight to North Wales will 90 holidaymakers enjoying time away from their normal surroundings all arranged and cared for by Lana Scott (Community Centre Manager) and her team of Volunteers.

From a Gardening Club to surfing the net.

With our new home comes a south facing veranda and the opportunity to create a new Gardening Club.

Busy people, colour, perfume and an engaging place to be is the outcome.



IT Classes

With our dedicated team of volunteers they have been able to encourage older people to email, skype, surf the net and use social media with confidence



Age UK East Grinstead & District in numbers April 2019 to March 2020

Saying goodbye to our Help at home Service

Sadly, during this period, and for financial reasons we said goodbye to the whole of our Help at Home team, who had supported members in their own homes tremendously over the many years.

Superbly managed, coordinated and organized by Jackie Dowling, Home Support Manager and with our Home Assistants delivering a service to extremely high standards of care, cleanliness and support to our members in their homes across the area, Thank you.



Five out of Five rating!

97 the number of people going on Holiday this year



Over 300 the number of people who went on a Trip or Outing this year



24 the number of people who attended our First Tea Dance



89 the number of people attended our foot care clinic



866 the number of people sang along with Liam and Anna



165 the number of people attended our computer classes

477 the number of people took part in Tai Chi



585 the number of people took part in Zumba Gold

Day Breaks for Carers

The Saturday Club Respite for Carers service has run each 1st & 3rd Saturday of the month

It has given Carers/family members a break from their caring role and is suitable for those supporting individuals living with dementia/memory loss, or the elderly/frail. On offer are a range of activities including arts & crafts, music, gentle exercise, quizzes, games and more.

All activities are tailored to the individual's preference/ability. A freshly prepared two

course meal is provided as well as afternoon tea & cake, and refreshments throughout.

"We know that Mum is made to feel very welcome and that she is taken care of. It gives us Carers a break"

"It is local & run by very caring & professional people, the activities are good and varied and very much enjoyed"



Financial information

Accounts 2019/2020

Total income	£ 332,766
Total expenditure	£ 377,600-
Net expenditure/income before gains & losses	£44,834-
Net realised and unrealised gains (losses) on fixed asset investments	£ 61,609-
Net movement in funds	£ 106,443-

Reserves

The charity's total reserves at 31 March 2020 were £665,061, of which £14,531 represents restricted funds.

Age UK East Grinstead & District

70th Anniversary



Age UK East Grinstead & District will be 70 years young in 2021 and to celebrate we are planning to raise £70,000 to support the most vulnerable older people in our area.

By setting ourselves this target, we will be digging into the can-do spirit of those who came before us when setting up the "Older Peoples Welfare Committee" back in 1951 which was based at the St. Thomas Workhouse in Glen Vue. In 1974 the Charity moved to a purpose-built centre at Swan Mead in Queens Road and became East Grinstead Age Concern. Becoming Age UK in 2008. In 2019 we went full circle and moved here to our new home in Glen Vue .

Age UK East Grinstead & District

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Corona Virus Pandemic

Clearly the crisis arising due to the Covid 19 Pandemic has had a major effect not only on our Charity, but also the Country and the World. Like many organisations we had to close down our normal operations, room hiring's, trips, outings and holidays so apart from County contractual funding and pre-applied for grants all income ceased. The building closed on Friday 20th March 2020. and we were at the forefront of the setting up of the East Grinstead Action Group.

We had to quickly come up with a plan to go from a Centre based operation to a Community based one from scratch. The first thing we did was to identify those who we knew would be at most risk, either through health, mental or having living arrangements issues. In the first week of the crisis we arrange for a team of volunteers to call members to ensure that they had enough food and medicines, this was at a time when shelves in supermarkets were being laid bare. A total lockdown of movement and clearly a most stressful time for all regardless of their welfare

During the first few days we received requests for very basic things -the toilet rolls issue, bread and milk, in some cases we even ran out made up sandwiches as some people had nothing to eat at all. As the calls came in grocery shopping and medicine pick ups began to rise, we provided an emergency pickup service, larger grocery shopping requests were signed posted to the Action Group. Benefit enquiries, rent arrears, care homes and other financial enquiries were passed on to our sister Age UK Brand Partner West Sussex's Information and Advice service together with any Help at home or hospital discharge enquiries.

From the regular wellbeing calls that we made as mentioned earlier, one theme became quite clear that was becoming was becoming an issue. Several restaurants, cafés and Public Houses had moved into the takeaway or hot food delivery service. However, for older people this was either too late in the evening, expensive or at worse not nutritious. The result meant that they were not having a hot meal during the day, either because they could not cook themselves or make use the takeaway services.

Following a meeting of the staff and Chair of Trustees a plan was formulated to set up a home delivery service from Glen Vue. Like the "Meals on Wheels" service that the East Grinstead Age Concern used to run in the 1960's. Although the comparisons quickly end there as Age Concern only delivered basic food two days a week and only produced 20 meals a week. During the first week of the new service over 100 meals were produced and delivered in conjunction with our friends from the East Grinstead Lions.

home deliveries

