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ISSUE 1



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Growing Old Doesn't Come with a Manual

Our Information and Advisory service help people to know their rights and make the best choices for later life.

We provide information and advice that covers every facet of later life, from helping people find out the benefits they are entitled to claim, to discussing options that help make later life at home more manageable. Our aim is to be the first port of call – the first place that people turn to when they have an age-related need.

At Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne we offer a free and confidential information and advice service for people over 50, plus to their families and carers. We're here to provide impartial advice, explain the choices available to you, ensuring the choice remains your own. Key Topics that we cover include:

Welfare benefits:

- Benefit checks
- Form filling for: Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Employment and Support Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Universal Credit, Job Seekers Allowance, Carers Allowance, Pension Credit, State Pension, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Council Tax Reduction.

Housing:

- Supporting people to understand and navigate the range of options available.
- Help with applying to the Housing Register.

Health & Social Care:

- Advice on accessing Social Care support for both funded & self-funded clients.



- Advice on statutory rights to Assessments.
- Advice on hospital discharge procedures.

Other:

- Information only on Power of Attorney's / Wills (not advice or help with applications).
- Help with Blue Badge and Disability Bus Pass applications.

Topics we don't cover include:

- Legal advice
- Financial advice
- Immigration advice
- Neighbour disputes
- Advocacy

If you don't see it on this list, it doesn't mean we can't help, just ask, reach out to us via:

Tel: 01795 532 766

or Email: IAenquiry@ageukfs.org.uk

Opening times: Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays) from 9:00am - 4:00pm

If we aren't open do check out our website which has loads of regularly updated information.

www.ageuk.org.uk/favershamandsittingbourne/our-services/information-and-advice/



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Lottery Funding

£3439 of National Lottery funding awarded to Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne towards tackling of activity inequalities in sport.

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne has been awarded £3439 of National Lottery funding from Sport England's Tackling Inequalities Fund which aims to tackle inequalities in activity levels through working with its partners to reach those most in need because of the impact of COVID-19.

The funding award will allow Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne to grow on the success of Walking Football sessions with the launch of Walking Netball, both activities provide low impact exercise while at the same time tackling isolation through group activities.

Sport England's work and contribution to Tackling Inequalities focuses on reducing the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on activity levels in under-represented groups, ensuring gaps between those who are active and those who are not do widen during this period.

With a strong understanding of the needs and issues in their areas, Sport England has initially channelled £110,000 through Kent Sport to support community groups in their areas as a result of the impacts of COVID-19.

This funding and support will enable community groups working with target audiences – Lower Socio-Economic Groups, Black, Asian Minority Ethnic Communities, Disabled People and People with Long-Term Health Conditions (LTC) – to continue to exist and engage with their communities with a view to keeping them active during both the lockdown and early recovery stages.

Clare Burgess, Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne, Chief Executive, said:

"I am delighted that after the success of Walking Football we have now been awarded funding to launch Walking Netball, the Covid pandemic has had a huge impact on loneliness and isolation across Swale and this will enable us to offer another way of engaging socially with the added benefit of encouraging low impact physical activity. I look forward to welcoming regular Walking Netballers soon".



Tim Hollingsworth, Sport England's Chief Executive, said:

"We are proud to be able to provide funding and support to Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne in this difficult period. This funding will help support our valuable community infrastructure that is so important in keeping the nation active and will also provide important connections and reconections for people whose lives have been affected by COVID-19 and for whom remaining active is so important for their physical, mental and social wellbeing. We know from our research and data that there are existing inequalities between groups when it comes to activity levels and COVID-19 has reinforced these.

"Thanks to the support of the National Lottery and its players, the Tackling Inequalities Fund will be both crucial and central to ensuring no-one is left behind when it comes to having the opportunity to be active during this period. This builds off the back of our £35m Community Emergency Fund that has already reached and supported over 7,500 community clubs and groups across England."

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6

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7

Befriending Service

A friend is for life until they have all gone.

We live our lives surrounded by family and friends but what happens when family is no longer close by and have family of their own and friends have passed away.

We at Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne recognise the value and benefit of regular social interaction and friendship in later life. That's why we offer a FREE befriending service to lonely or isolated people aged 50 or above living in our community.

Our aim is to provide a carefully matched, volunteer befriender who will normally visit for about an hour a week and/or talk on the phone.

All our volunteer befrienders are carefully selected, and DBS checked. Our befrienders offer a kind, patient listening ear and may also be able to provide details of other services that may be helpful. Befriending can be an essential link between someone and the outside world.

Each befriender and their "friend" might enjoy a cuppa together or perhaps play a game, do puzzles, swap stories, and hopefully enjoy some laughs. We hope this will always be an hour a week to look forward to!

To be considered for the service individuals must be:

- Aged 50 or over living in the Sittingbourne, Teynham, Faversham areas (post codes ME9 / ME10 / ME13)

Our aim is to assess every referral individually for suitability. We regret that in some circumstances a person's needs may exceed the support available from our service, in these cases we will endeavour to provide information on suitable support. Whilst we welcome referrals for anyone who meets the above criteria, Priority will be given to clients who:

- Live alone
- Have little or no friends visiting on a regular basis
- Have no family close by
- Do not attend other activities, such as day centres, community classes

Referrals to the service can be made by anyone (with the individual's consent) – e.g., family members, health and social care professionals.

Referral Forms can be found on our website. www.ageuk.org.uk/favershamandsittingbourne/activities-and-events/befriending/

If you are interested in having a befriender, becoming a befriender, would like more information, or you know someone who might benefit from the service, please contact our Nikki Holt on Tel: **01795 532766** or **07538 315338** or by e-mail nikki.holt@ageukfs.org.uk



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Volunteers Needed



Can you spare a little time and be an Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne Volunteer?

We have some great vacancies for great people.

Café Culture Sentado Sittingbourne

We are looking to find a volunteer who loves to meet new people, help alleviate loneliness, in a group setting over a coffee or tea.

Time Commitment is two hours on a Thursday Morning.

Caretaker/Keyholder Age UK Faversham

We are looking for someone to open and close the centre. Can set up for events and disassemble afterwards ready for our centre clients the next day. Is able to meet clients to discuss their needs for events and groups.

Time Commitment varies.

Walking Netball Abbey School Faversham

We are looking for someone to support our new Walking Netball Sessions. A fully experienced coach will be delivering the sessions but there will be an opportunity to attend a walking netball host training sessions with the possibility of this being a paid position in the future.

Time Commitment Tuesday Evenings for 1.5 – 2 hours

Mecca Bingo Sittingbourne

We are looking for a volunteer to support our sessions at Mecca Bingo. The volunteer needs to be able to transport clients to and from the local area as well as support people to enjoy the sessions.

Time commitment is 4 hours on a Thursday Morning.

F&S Food Delivery Driver Faversham & Sittingbourne

We are looking for a volunteer driver to deliver our hot lunchtime food. Ideally with own vehicle to carry hot meal bags to our community residents and centres.

Time Commitment is up to 2 hours per day.

Walking Football Swallows Leisure Centre Sittingbourne

We are looking for someone to support our Walking Football Sessions. A fully experienced coach will be delivering the sessions but there will be an opportunity to attend a walking football host training sessions with the possibility of this being a paid position in the future.

Time Commitment Tuesday Lunchtimes 1.5 – 2 hours

For information on all these vacancies & others please contact amy.glover@ageukfs.org.uk

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Menopausal: Nothing to be Ashamed Of

6 Quick Facts about the menopause.

1. The menopause is caused by changes in hormone levels which take place as a woman gets older.
2. Menopausal symptoms can include hot flushes, mood changes, memory problems and changes in sex drive.
3. The length of time that symptoms last for varies between individuals, but averages about 4 years.
4. Treatment is available to help with symptoms if you want it.
5. A healthy diet and regular exercise, alongside simple behavioural changes, can improve some symptoms.
6. Talking helps – friends, family and professionals can give support and guidance.

Why does the menopause happen?

The menopause is a normal part of the life cycle, where levels of the hormone oestrogen decline with age, so periods become less frequent and eventually stop altogether. This means a woman is no longer able to get pregnant.

What are the symptoms?

A change in the pattern of your periods is the first sign of the menopause. Other symptoms include hot flushes, night sweats, anxiety, memory problems, vaginal dryness and changes in sex drive.

Symptoms vary between individuals – some women will experience mild symptoms while others may have symptoms that have a big impact on their everyday life.

How long does the menopause last?

Symptoms of the menopause can start months or even years before periods stop completely. They usually continue for around 4 years after your last period, though some women's symptoms continue for much longer.

The menopause usually happens between the ages of 45 and 55, but it's very difficult to predict when it will take place in an individual.

Are there treatments for the menopause?

If your symptoms are severe, there's treatment available which could help. This includes hormone replacement therapy (HRT), which replaces oestrogen to alleviate symptoms, creams for



vaginal dryness, and cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) to help with mood changes. Speak to your doctor about the risks and benefits of different treatments.

What can I do to help myself?

To help you manage hot flushes, simple things like wearing light clothing, using a fan and keeping your bedroom cool could help.

If you're struggling with your mood, consider trying self-help measures like relaxation, getting enough sleep and staying active. Regular physical activity and eating a healthy diet can also help to improve menopausal symptoms.

Who can I talk to?

Though there's still stigma and embarrassment around the menopause, it's important to know that you're not alone and there's support out there.

Try to be open about your symptoms with your partner, family and friends – it can help them to understand what you're going through and could reduce any embarrassment about symptoms.

Sharing experiences with other women going through the same thing could be reassuring.

That's why we are launching a regular menopausal group for people to meet other people going through the same time in their life, with regular guest speakers and alternative treatments discussed this will be the ideal space to learn and share.

For more information about the group please e-mail amy.glover@ageukfs.co.uk

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What to do in the Garden this time of the Year?

Shrubs

- It's time to prune deciduous shrubs and fruit trees before the sap starts to rise and the bud's break. Cut out anything that's dead, diseased, or damaged. Also look at the shape of trees and shrubs – rounded is usually best, with no crossing branches.



Perennials

- If you want to grow something a bit different, think about planting seeds, as it gives you an enormous range of options.

Fruit and vegetables

- The vegetable garden is all about preparation at this time of year, but there are a few things you can start to sow.
- Digging is the thing to do now. Leave the soil in rough chunks and it will be broken down by the weather in time for sowing.
- Potatoes, onion sets, and shallots can be planted in a few weeks so it's a good idea to order them now.
- Cut back autumn-fruiting raspberries. These flower and fruit on this year's growth, so if you cut back the old stems, you'll encourage new growth and get a better crop.
- Sow early crops of hardy broad beans outdoors. If you don't have much space, investigate dwarf vegetables. Keep going with successional sowings of hardy broad beans.
- If you have room under cover, you can sow tender vegetables such as tomatoes, chillies, peppers, and cucumbers.
- You can also start on some of the hardier vegetables that just need a bit of protection, such as broad beans, beetroot, carrots, and early peas.

Hedges

- This is a good month to plant hedges. It's worth looking out for bare-root plants as they're cheaper than pot-grown ones. They're dug up from the field and posted directly to you, so they miss out on all the costs of watering and re-potting that bump up the price of container-grown plants. The availability of bare-root plants depends on the weather, but they should be around until the end of February and into March.

Roses

- If you didn't do it in autumn, this is the time to prune roses and other summer-flowering shrubs such as late clematis and buddleias. This pruning is for flowers and there's a simple way to approach it; every time you make a cut, and always cut just above a bud, imagine a new stem coming from that bud with a season's growth with a flower on the end of it. So, if you want your flowers dotted around the plant, prune as far down to the ground as you can get.

If this all sounds exhausting, then Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne have a Gardening Service that can help you out. You get the same person each visit, who is DBS checked, fully experienced, will perform a wellness check and make time for a quick chat too.

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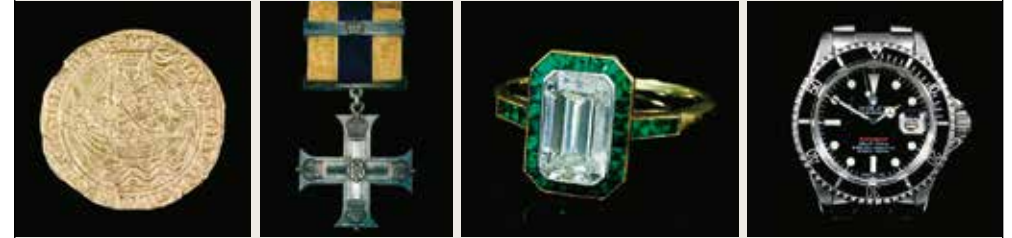
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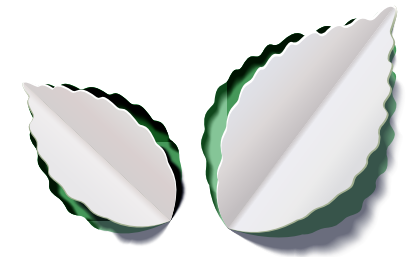
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Lasting Power of Attorney

One person in the UK develops dementia every three minutes. But please do not assume relatives can just walk into a bank and access your money, even if it is to pay for your care. Unless you have a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) already. Loved ones would need to apply through court, which can be long and costly. **So, act now.**

Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) is a legal document where someone (while they still have mental capacity) nominates a trusted friend or relative to look after their affairs if they lost capacity. You can choose whether it can be used either before, or only when, you lose mental capacity. Your representative should only ever make a choice for you if you are unable to make that specific decision at the time it needs to be made. For example, if you fall into a coma, your representative will start looking after your affairs. Yet if you wake from the coma, you should be able to make your own decisions again.

There are two types of LPA: one for property and finance, and another for health and welfare. In a nutshell, the health and welfare document allows a nominated individual make decisions over day-to-day healthcare and medical treatments, as well as deal with any health and social care staff. It is also worth noting these are two separate legal procedures that are independent of one another. Just because you give the trusted person power of attorney over your health, that does not mean they will automatically gain control over your financial affairs and vice versa. If you require the same individual to have power of attorney over both aspects of your care, then two separate applications are required. Another key difference is that the health and welfare LPA can only be used after the person loses capacity, not before. For those who want to decide any 'advance decisions' – e.g., you do not want certain types of medical treatment in certain situations, if you lose capacity in future – you can make a living will also known as an Advance Directive.

You may be thinking "this doesn't affect us, we're perfectly well". This is a common misunderstanding. The key thing to remember is... You can only set up a Lasting Power of Attorney while you have mental capacity. Once you have lost capacity, it is too late. The key is to act early. Regardless of health, everyone should consider a Lasting Power of Attorney. Anyone over 18 can set it up – you do not need to be unwell.

There is no specific age when you should consider making a Power of Attorney. Young people can lose capacity through accidents. But if someone is diagnosed with a condition likely to cause loss of capacity, they may be well advised to think about who they want to make decisions for them when they can no longer do so.

For more information, call Humphrey and Scace Limited on:
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An interview with senior audiologist, Sally French, Hearbase at Canterbury Chaucer Hospital

What is an audiologist?

An audiologist is a clinical health care professional responsible for helping those who have problems with their hearing and balance disorders. It's a highly qualified role, and each day an audiologist could be assessing and fitting hearing aids, providing ear protection, tinnitus support and advising on balance and wax removal.

How long have you been at Hearbase?

I have been at Hearbase for over 23 years now and I enjoy my work, especially meeting and helping so many people all over Canterbury, old and young, from all walks of life. I am based at the Hearbase clinic at the wonderful Chaucer Hospital, Nackington Road, Canterbury CT4 7AR.

What are the first signs of a hearing problem?

Some of the early signs are when you struggle to keep up with conversation in noisy places, when your family tell you the TV is too loud,



or when you have difficulty hearing people clearly. If you experience ringing or buzzing in your ears, or head, or a feeling of blockage, these can also be early signs of hearing loss.



Why should I have my hearing tested?

Not being able to hear, seriously impacts your quality of life, not to mention talking with friends, family and others. I recommend if you show any of these early signs, you should get it checked. If you are concerned about someone close to you who struggles to hear, speak to them about getting a free hearing test and why not join them to offer support if they need a little bit of encouragement?

Why should I go to Hearbase Chaucer Hospital Canterbury?

Well, to start, our hearing tests are completely free. This isn't unique to us, you can get your hearing tested elsewhere, but as we are expert audiologists, if we find anything of concern after your free hearing test, we will point you in the direction of specialist services quickly. We are a really friendly bunch of people and



our focus is to listen and help you to manage your hearing.

How should I look after my hearing?

If you notice any change to your hearing, large or small, then always get it checked. This is important however old or young you are. If you work in a noisy place or have a history of hearing loss in your family, have a hearing test, it only takes 30 minutes. Call us on **0800 077 3061** or email **admin@hearbase.com** and book your free hearing test at Hearbase at Chaucer Hospital Canterbury today!



You may have had problems remembering things that have happened recently or have found yourself getting confused in familiar places. You may be worried these are signs of dementia, though being forgetful doesn't necessarily mean you have dementia.

What are the symptoms of dementia?

Dementia is a term used to describe a collection of symptoms that occur when certain diseases or conditions affect the brain. The symptoms will depend on which condition is causing the dementia and which parts of the brain are affected. Some of the more common symptoms include:

Problems with memory

- Having trouble remembering the date and day of the week.
- Forgetting names of people or things.
- Struggling to remember things that happened recently, even though you remember things from longer ago.
- Forgetting where you put something or where things are kept.

Problems with thinking skills

- Feeling your thoughts or memories are clouded.
- Finding it takes you longer to process information.
- Struggling to follow conversations.
- Getting yourself in a muddle and being unable to arrange things in the right order.
- Finding your decision making is affected, for example cooking too much or too little food.

Disorientation

- Feeling confused or even lost in a familiar place.
- Being out and forgetting where you were going or how to get there.
- Getting confused between night and day.
- Problems with spatial awareness.

Struggling to follow things

- Finding it difficult to follow conversations, particularly in groups.



- Struggling to follow the television or losing track of a book or newspaper article.
- Repeating things or forgetting what you were saying mid-sentence.

Mood and personality changes

- Experiencing mood swings.
- Becoming irritable or short-tempered.
- Losing interest in hobbies and socialising.

If problems like this start to affect your daily life, it's worth making an appointment to discuss them with your doctor. If you're worried about someone else, try to encourage them to see their doctor. You could offer to go with them for support if they seem a bit reluctant.

Being forgetful doesn't necessarily mean you have dementia.

As we get older, many of us experience symptoms like these from time to time.

Dementia-like symptoms can be caused by depression, vitamin deficiencies, stress, thyroid problems, or urinary tract infections. If you're worried, you should see your GP.

What are the main types of dementia?

Dementia isn't a disease, it's a term used to describe symptoms caused by other diseases that affect the brain. Knowing the type of dementia means treatment can be more specific to an individual's needs. The most common types of dementia are:

Alzheimer's disease

Alzheimer's disease is a form of dementia that targets the part of the brain that controls memory, language and thought. Alzheimer's and dementia often get confused with one another, which can cause upset and confusion.

Vascular dementia

Vascular dementia is the second most common type of dementia, after Alzheimer's disease. This type of dementia is caused when the brain becomes damaged due to lack of blood supply, for instance following a stroke.

Other types of dementia

There are many other, rarer, types of dementia such as dementia with Lewy bodies or frontotemporal dementia. Conditions such as multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease and Huntington's disease may lead to someone developing dementia.

What should I do if I think I have dementia?

If you're worried you may have dementia or feel it may be affecting someone you know, it's important you go to your doctor.

Your doctor may carry out some tests to check your thinking and memory and decide what is causing your symptoms. They may decide based on this, but they may have to refer you for a fuller assessment to a memory clinic or consultant with specialist knowledge.

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne run many types of support groups and are happy to answer any questions about these or any other support you or a loved one require. Contact us on reception@ageukfs.org.uk or on **01795 532766**



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The mental benefits of sport and physical activity cannot be overstated.

Sport has always been known for their physical benefits. In recent years, research has also found that sport participation can also positively affect your mental health.

Sport improves your mood

Want a burst of happiness and relaxation? It's time to try physical activity!

Whether you are playing sports or taking a brisk walk, physical activity triggers brain chemicals that make you feel happier and more relaxed.

Team sports, provide a chance to unwind and engage in a satisfying challenge that improves your fitness.

They also provide social benefits by allowing you to connect with teammates and friends in a recreational setting.

Sport improves your concentration

Regular physical activity helps keep your key mental skills sharp as you age. This includes sharp thinking, learning, and using good judgment.

Sport reduces stress and depression

When you are physically active, your mind is distracted from daily stresses. Being active can help you to avoid getting bogged down by negative thoughts. Exercise reduces the levels of stress hormones in your body.

At the same time, physical activity stimulates production of endorphins. These are natural mood lifters that can help keep stress and depression at bay. Endorphins may also leave you feeling more relaxed and optimistic.

Sport improves sleep habits

Sport and other forms of physical activity improve the quality of sleep. It does this by helping you fall asleep faster and deepening your sleep.

Sleeping better can improve your mental outlook the next day, as well as improving your mood.

Sport helps you maintain a healthy weight

The NHS recommend sports participation as a healthy way to maintain weight.



Staying within a recommended weight range reduces the likelihood of developing diabetes, high cholesterol, and hypertension.

Sport boosts your self-confidence

The regular exercise that comes with playing sport can help boost your confidence and improve your self-esteem. As your strength, skills, and stamina increase through playing sports, your self-image will improve as well.

Sport provides you with a sense of mastery and control, which often leads to a feeling of pride and self-confidence. With the renewed vigour and energy that comes from physical activity, you may be more likely to succeed in tasks off the playing field as well as on it.

Mental benefits of sport for older people

Sports isn't just for young people! On the contrary, older people who are active are shown to be healthier and on average live longer. In remaining active as you get older, you can strengthen your muscles and bones, and reduce risks such as falls and heart disease.

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne have a range of sports and exercises for older people

Visit the website www.ageukfs.org.uk for information on a wide range of activities from Walking Football & Netball through to Armchair Exercises and Laughing Yoga.



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Collectors Corner: Silver Boxes Coin It In & A Strongbox Gives Up Its Secret At The Canterbury Auction Galleries

You know what...it never ceases to amaze me what comes along to our Auction House and what we discover at our clients homes, all of it is thanks to the collectors out there, below are just some of the items sold at our last sale – all of it came from Kent.

Collections of Anglo-Saxon coins and precious silver and enamel boxes were the highlights of the October three-day sale at the The Canterbury Auction Galleries. The former were discovered in a bank vault only after documents were found in the late owner's park home and after attracting international interest from fellow numismatists, they sold for a staggering £185,000.

The most valuable single coin the collection was an extremely rare gold Thrymsa, or shilling, dating from 640-660 and minted in Northumbria or York, which was estimated at £8,000-12,000. It sold for £17,500.

Bidders in London, throughout England, Scandinavia, Europe and the United States competed for ownership of just over 100 lots of silver and enamel boxes. Among the most wanted was an elegant early 20th century French 18ct gold card case with chain, probably intended to hold dance cards.

The case sold for an above estimate for £2,300.

There were further gratifying surprises for other private vendors in the sale. The owner of a late 19th century Ottoman silver, engraved terrestrial globe inherited the fine scientific and decorative piece from his grandfather and was delighted when it sold for £10,600.

Similarly, an early 18th century Chinese famille verte porcelain punch bowl enamelled in colours with figures and attendants in a landscape, 12ins (30.5cm) diameter x 6ins (15.25cm) high, from a local estate sold to a Far Eastern bidder for £4,100.

The most valuable piece of jewellery in the sale: a modern ruby and diamond ring, the 18ct gold setting featuring a central 5 carat stone flanked by 10 brilliant-cut round diamonds, of approximately 1ct total weight, which sold to a local buyer for £3,000.

Landscapist John Northcote Nash (1893-1977) has a strong following among collectors, one of



Chinese Famille Vert Porcelain Punch Bowl, Early 18th Century



Gold Thrymsa (640-660) Northumbria/York, 14mm. 1.3g, VF

whom picked up two watercolours to add to his collection. More valuable of the two was a view of "Ben Tiannavig", on the Isle of Skye, signed, 13ins x 17.75ins, which doubled its estimate to sell for £3,000, while an unnamed scene of a hillside track with leafless trees, 8.75ins x 11.75ins, sold on top estimate for £1,500. The latter came from the Laurence John Lee Collection.

None of this would be possible without the diligent work of the collector through the generations, so KEEP ON COLLECTING...

Dave Parker BSc(hons) ASFAV
Managing Director,
The Canterbury Auction Galleries

If you wonder what your items are worth please contact the saleroom for a free valuation, telephone **01277 763337** or **general@tcag.co.uk**



THE BIG KNIT



Step 1: pick your pattern

Step 2: knit, knit, knit (or crochet)!

Step 3: send in your hats

This year we are aiming big and are targeting a record year of 3000 hats made this is 1000 more than we normally achieve but WE CAN DO IT. If we hit our target, we will make £750 which would cover the cost for 35 lonely people to have some company.

For each be-hatted smoothie sold, Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne receives 25p.

Patterns are on our website at www.ageuk.org.uk/favershamandsittingbourne/activities-and-events/the-big-knit/ or scan the QR Code below.

Finished hats should be sent or dropped in to Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne, The Old Fire Station, Crescent Road, Faversham, ME13 7GU



Don't allow Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) to get the better of you

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that occurs mostly in this season when it's more common. It is caused by us adjusting to the change in seasons and feeling lower in mood and energy.

What are the symptoms of SAD?

Typical symptoms of seasonal affective disorder include:

- low mood
- lacking energy
- sleeping for longer and struggling to get up in the morning
- overeating
- not enjoying things, you usually do
- difficulty with concentration and memory.

The severity of symptoms varies from one person to another. Some people might just find it harder to get out of bed on dark, chilly mornings whilst others find that their symptoms have a big impact on their daily life.

What causes SAD?

It's not known exactly what causes SAD, but it's thought to be linked to shorter days and less exposure to sunlight in the winter months.

It's not unusual for older people to notice symptoms for the first time if they start to spend more time indoors due to health or mobility problems.

How is SAD treated?

If you're struggling to cope with symptoms of SAD, you should visit your doctor. They may ask you questions about your mood, lifestyle, eating and sleeping habits, and the seasonal pattern of your symptoms.

Treatment available includes cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT), where you talk to a trained therapist to help change the way you think and feel about situations. You could try light therapy, which involves sitting in front of a special lamp that mimics sunlight. Your doctor can also prescribe antidepressants, which can help lift your mood.

Speak to your GP about the risks and benefits of different treatments.



What can I do to help myself?

As the nights draw in and the mornings get darker, it can make even those of us with the sunniest dispositions feel a little glum. But there are lots of simple things you can do which might help boost your mood.

Get natural sunlight

Getting outside in the natural sunlight as much as possible can help boost your mood. Even a short daily walk can help.

If you find it hard to get out, try and make your home as bright as possible by opening the curtains and sitting near the window.

Stay active

Regular activity, especially outdoors on a bright day, can help with symptoms of low mood and depression. Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne have regular Walking Football & Walking Netball games that you can join in with.

www.ageuk.org.uk/favershamandsittingbourne/activities-and-events/walking-football/

www.ageuk.org.uk/favershamandsittingbourne/activities-and-events/walking-netball/

Connect with others

Winter can make us feel more isolated, but there are lots of ways to keep in touch. From email and text message to a good old-fashioned post, try to find ways to reach out to friends and family.

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne's Befriender Service offers a free service, matching a DBS checked volunteer with you. It's a great way to make a new friend and enjoy regular conversation.

Have things to look forward to

If finding things to enjoy about winter proves too much, keep in mind that spring will come – and with it warmer weather, the first spring blooms, and green leaves on the trees.

Get cosy

There's nothing like a hearty stew or steaming bowl of soup to make you feel cosier on a dreary day. And it's important to eat well through the winter months. If the thought of cooking or is too difficult then Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne's F&S Food Delivered may be your solution, providing fresh hot cooked meals daily, with locally sourced ingredients, delivered straight to your door. Scan the QR Code in this article for a direct link to the menu or visit our website: www.ageuk.org.uk/favershamandsittingbourne/our-services/f-s-food/fs-menus/

If winter means you tend to stay indoors more, keeping busy with hobbies can help keep your mind active. Books can be a wonderful way of transporting yourself to another place and lifting your spirits or take part in crafts, The Big Knit, has small easy to make projects, which raise 25p for each one completed for Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne. Information can be found on our website: www.ageuk.org.uk/favershamandsittingbourne/activities-and-events/the-big-knit/



For further information and help, contact Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne on 01795 532766 or e-mail on reception@ageukfs.org.uk

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Who are you and what do you do at Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne?

My name is Clare Burgess and I am the Chief Executive of Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne

What does your role involve?

I am ultimately responsible for ensuring the strategy developed by the trustee board is delivered by myself, the team of amazing, employed staff and volunteers we work with.

I am very lucky as this means my role is really diverse and interesting as no two days are the same. I can be working on service delivery one day, presenting to people about our charity the next, I could be creating budgets for the next 3 years or spending time with our funders and building relationships with new funders, reviewing risk assessments including Covid planning, the next.

What do you love most about your role? –

I love seeing the difference we make. Everything we do has only one goal in mind and that is to ensure every decision we make has our client's best interests at the heart of it.

What was your biggest challenge of 2021?

Wow that has to be Covid. After joining the organisation during the first lockdown I don't think I really thought we would still have COVID 19 in our lives for all of 2021. It has been a real challenge to balance making sure everyone remains safe and also delivering vital services to our community. I am not going to lie I have had many a sleepless night during 2021.

What was your biggest success of 2021? –

Bringing the charity and our amazing team of people safely through the year and launching new services at the same time. We have managed to launch a number of new services and put in the planning for lots more to come!

What are your hopes for 2022? –

For a calmer year, I think. We have some important decisions being made by our main funder in 2022 and this may impact how we run, but we are confident that the charity is sustainable and ready for future challenges



What is the one thing that you think people don't know about Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne? -

It's always a surprise to me that people don't realise that we are an independent local charity. Whilst we hold a brand partnership from Age UK (National) we are a completely separate charity and rely on local funders, donations and legacies to exist.

We would welcome having some larger local corporate sponsors join us over the next year, so if your organisation is looking for a charity to support, please do contact me clare.burgess@ageukfs.org.uk, I would love to show you our amazing charity, the genuine positive impacts we have on peoples' lives and the projects we aim to deliver in the next year and beyond.



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Did you know that 1 in 6 people each week will suffer from Stress, Anxiety or Depression?

If any of the below applies to you then we can likely help you:-

- Feeling down and low, anxious, worried or stressed
- Suffering from panic attacks, a traumatic experience or phobia
- Going through a crisis, bereavement, redundancy, early retirement or illness
- Having to face a separation or divorce and wanting some help
- Suffering from the effects of physical, emotional or sexual abuse
- Wanting someone to share your thoughts and feelings with to help see a way through
- Wanting to work on your personal growth
- Wanting to talk about other issues in confidence

The first step to tackling any of this, is asking for help.

FCS 'Private & Corporate' Service offers evidence based therapy provided by Accredited Therapists with a wealth of experience in many settings.

We offer a range of different therapy options, including 1-2-1 Therapy, EMDR trauma Therapy, and Couple's Therapy.

We work with you at your pace for as long as you feel necessary and we review the work and progress as we go.



To find out more information and cost of sessions for our Private & Corporate services, you can email us at admin@favershams counselling.co.uk

Or can call us, for an informal chat, with our friendly and supportive staff on Faversham 01795 591019.

With the colder winter months ahead, paying fuel and energy bills can be daunting. If you need extra support in reducing your water and energy bills, you can reach out to Swale Borough Council Fuel and Water Home Adviser Service for free help and advice.

The free and confidential service can help with advice on how to effectively manage energy and water use in your homes, and support if you are eligible to apply for grants and emergency fuel vouchers.

Our adviser Stevie can also help you apply for a lower tariff on your water bills if you receive benefits - pension credit, disability allowance, PIP etc

You can make a self-referral to the service by calling Stevie directly or health workers, family finance workers, housing associations, food banks and other charities are able to make a referral on your behalf.

It's simple to make an appointment with Fuel and Water Home Adviser Service call **01795 667070** or **07862 158783**.

When you make an appointment to have a chat with Stevie you will receive a free energy efficiency pack containing, radiator panels, led light bulbs, water hippo, draught excluder, dehumidifier, gunk pot and other energy saving items worth £40

Top tips for saving energy and water

There are some simple ways to save money and energy in your home:

- Changing lightbulbs new lightbulbs use less energy and cost less to run. By replacing them with LED with a lower wattage but the same light output you could save £10 per year per lightbulb.
- Boiling water with a kettle by only filling a kettle with the amount of water you need for your hot drink you can avoid wasting energy boiling excess water.
- You can save more than £23 a year just by being careful with how you use kitchen appliances.

For more tips like this, book an appointment with Stevie on **07862 158783**



Walking Netball is a slowed down version of the game of netball, designed for anyone looking to exercise in a relaxed, supportive and friendly environment. A game of Walking Netball is for all ages and abilities and every session contains a gentle warm-up.

"Trying not to run is the hard part."

"It's a great leveler and is for all abilities and standards. There's no advantage to being quick on the court so this makes it fair."

"It's good for training too. Your health is the most important thing and it's not just netball, it's social too."

How do I get back on court?



Walking Netball has arrived!!!

5.30PM till 6.30PM

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For more information or to book a place

Please contact amy.glover@ageukfs.org.uk


or call **01795 532766**

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Tover is pleased to be working with Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne installing their award winning care system, Tovertafel, at their location in Faversham.

The Tovertafel is the only scientifically proven serious games system for dementia and intellectual disability care that improves quality of life, care and staff happiness.

Wishing you a lot of happy moments with the Tovertafel, Team Tover ♥

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne – Providing Support for People Living with Dementia

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne is encouraging people living with dementia in the Faversham, Sittingbourne and surrounding areas to join its specialist group to help provide support and improve their wellbeing through a range of activities.



The group sessions are designed for older people with mild to moderate dementia and involve a range of fun and interactive activities such as games, music, art, cooking and exercise classes. As well as helping with memory and mental activity, such as thoughts, emotions and behaviour, the sessions also give older people the chance to meet and socialise with people who are also living with dementia.

Clare Burgess, CEO at Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne said: *“Our sessions are now open and we’re welcoming local people living with dementia, and their carers, to come along to meet us and try out our activities. The sessions offer expert help and support, and not only are the activities involved fun and interactive, but we also hope people can build friendships along the way.”*

The sessions, which are also known as Maintenance Cognitive Stimulation Therapy, is the only non-drug treatment recommended to improve memory and thought processes, independence and well-being by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

The sessions take place on a Thursday in both Faversham and Sittingbourne, these sessions are available for those with mild to moderate dementia aged 50 and over.

To sign up or find out more, please visit www.ageuk.org.uk/favershamandsittingbourne or contact amy.glover@ageukfs.org.uk

Our Faversham office

Age UK Faversham

The Old Fire Station,
Crescent Road,
Faversham
ME13 7GU

Opening Times: Monday - Friday 9am - 4pm

Phone number: **01795 532766**
Email: reception@ageukfs.org.uk

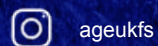
Our Sittingbourne office

Age UK Sittingbourne

Avenue of Remembrance,
Sittingbourne,
ME10 4NN

Opening Times: Monday - Friday 9am - 4pm

Telephone: **01795 477520**
Email: reception@ageukfs.org.uk



LGBTQIA+

It's not just all alphabet soup

Since 1988, National Coming Out Day has been observed on Oct. 11 as an occasion for LGBTQIA+ people to celebrate their identities or discuss them with family and friends for the first time.

But coming out isn't limited to a certain time of year, or to teenagers and young adults. An estimated 1 million LGBT adults in the United Kingdom are age 50 and older, and for those in midlife and beyond, the process of coming out to loved ones — including spouses, children, and friends — can pose unique challenges, even as it brings tremendous freedom.

Those grappling with their gender identity may struggle for years but aren't able to comfortably explore or articulate their feelings until later in life, leading to years not knowing where they fit in life or society. Leading to many differing problems such as alcoholism, self-harm, suicide attempts and drugs.

“My whole life I was hiding the issue of gender identity,” says author Grace Anne Stevens, 72. “I knew that I had an issue — but not what it was or how to deal with it — I knew I wasn't gay, I knew there was a community for me but not who that community was”.

Stevens eventually came out as a transgender woman at age 64. She successfully transitioned in two workplaces and came out to her three grown children, all of whom are accepting of her identity, she says, as are her grandkids, who call her Grace.

Not all stories end as happily as Grace's, many end in isolation, discrimination, and loneliness.

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne believes in equality for all and as such are launching a monthly safe haven group to give support, be social and make new friends.

Lesbian:
A woman who is attracted only to other women.

Gay:
A man who is attracted only to other men, but also used to broadly describe people who are attracted to the same sex.

Bisexual:
Anyone who is attracted to more than one sex/gender.

Transgender:
Someone whose gender identity differs from their gender at birth.

Transsexual:
Similar to transgender but it refers to people who desire to or have permanently transitioned to the gender with which they identify, seeking medical assistance.

Queer:
Reclaimed pejorative term now used by people who don't identify with the binary terms of male and female or gay and straight and do not wish to label themselves by their sex acts.

Questioning:
Someone who is still questioning or exploring their sexual/gender identity.

Intersex:
Someone who's body is neither fully male or female due to medical variation. Includes people previously known as hermaphrodites, now considered an offensive term.

Ally:
Someone who is straight but supports the LGBTQQIAAP community.

Asexual:
Someone with no sexual attraction to any gender.

Pansexual:
Someone whose sexual attraction is not based on gender and more based on personality. They may also be gender fluid.





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