



# Strategic Review 2026–2031

Date: March 2026

# Table of Contents

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 02-03 | Executive Summary                                   |
| 04-05 | Relationship to our Internal Business Plan          |
| 08-09 | Our Current Services and Activities                 |
| 10-11 | Benefits of Our Services and Activities             |
| 12-13 | Why We Exist Now: Need, Demand and Evidence         |
| 14-16 | Strategic Engagement Survey (July 2025)             |
| 17    | Challenges and Risks                                |
| 18-19 | Vision for 2026–2031                                |
| 20    | Our Strategic Goals (2026–2031)                     |
| 21    | Our Service and Income Priorities (2026–2031)       |
| 22    | Marketing and Promotion of Our Services             |
| 23    | Innovation and Digital Enablement (2026–2031)       |
| 24-25 | Roadmap and Measures of Success (2026–2031)         |
| 26    | Ashford Community Support Hub Vision                |
| 28    | Governance, Review and Accountability               |
| 29    | Appendix A: Governance, Review and Accountability   |
| 30-31 | Appendix B: Background and History (Summary)        |
| 32    | Appendix C: Formation of the Strategy (Methodology) |

# Executive Summary



This Strategic Review sets out Age UK Hythe, Lyminge and Ashford’s direction for the period 2026–2031. It reflects extensive engagement with service users, staff, volunteers, partners and the wider community, alongside detailed analysis of service data, financial pressures and future demand.

Over the next five years, the organisation will focus its resources on four Impact-Critical service areas which provide the greatest direct benefit for older people and are central to supporting independence, reducing isolation and maintaining wellbeing:

- Dementia Services
- Wellbeing Services
- Community Meals
- Information and Advice

Alongside these, we recognise that our long-term resilience depends on sustainable income, visibility and community connection. Therefore, our cafés and charity retail offer (including online retail opportunities) will be actively reviewed and developed as Sustainability and Community Gateway Services, both to generate unrestricted income and to serve as a welcoming “front door” into the charity for the wider community.

Other valued services, including Independent Living, will be maintained at sustainable levels and kept under review to ensure that we protect the capacity needed for Impact-Critical services while remaining responsive to local need.

Community presence remains fundamental to our identity. We are committed to being visible, accessible and engaged across towns, villages and rural communities, ensuring older people and carers know where to find support.

A key long-term ambition within this strategy is the development of the Ashford centre into a Community Support Hub, offering integrated advice, support, a café and a charity shop. This ambition will require significant investment and close partnership with Ashford Borough Council and other stakeholders.

Alongside strengthening local delivery, we will deepen our role in county-wide collaboration through our membership of United Ages of Kent (CIC). This partnership places us in a stronger position to participate in health and social care tenders, collaborative funding bids and system-wide innovation, while contributing to a more consistent and coordinated approach across Kent.

This Strategic Review has been developed through an evidence-led process using live service data and stakeholder insight, and will be reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to reflect local need, funding conditions and opportunities for partnership and innovation, while remaining true to our mission of supporting older people to live well within their communities.



## Relationship to our Internal Business Plan

This Strategic Review sets the **strategic direction** and priorities for 2026–2031 and is intended as a trustee-level and public-facing statement of intent. It will be supported by an **internal Business Plan**, which will translate these priorities into detailed operational delivery plans, annual budgets, workforce planning, income targets, and risk controls.

The Business Plan will be updated annually to reflect changing funding conditions and demand, while this Strategic Review will be reviewed at least annually and refreshed as required.

### Introduction

Age UK Hythe, Lyminge and Ashford has remained steadfast in its commitment to supporting older people in our communities, even amidst significant challenges over the past few years. The lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, combined with the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, rising inflation, and increases in Employer National Insurance contributions and the minimum wage, have placed unprecedented financial pressures on our organisation.

In addition to these economic challenges, we have faced reductions in funding and the potential for further losses, forcing us to make some difficult decisions to safeguard our services. During the year 2024, difficult decisions were made to protect the sustainability of our organisation. The Laundry Service was discontinued due to low uptake and increasing costs to deliver it. Additionally, we relocated our Dementia Services to Hythe and closed the Lyminge building due to high maintenance costs, underuse, and the age of the building, which

was in need of repairs beyond our financial capabilities. These pressures have required us to adapt quickly and act decisively, often deviating from our original plans to respond effectively to our evolving circumstances.

Despite these hurdles, we remain committed to providing vital services that improve the lives of older people in Hythe, Lyminge, Ashford and surrounding areas. This Strategic Review outlines our direction for the next five years, balancing ambition with pragmatism as we navigate a landscape of uncertainty. By focusing on resilience, innovation and collaboration, we aim to ensure that our organisation continues to thrive and meet the needs of the communities we serve.

### Who We Are and What We Do Now

Age UK Hythe, Lyminge and Ashford offers a comprehensive array of activities and services tailored to meet the diverse needs of older people in the community. These activities are designed to enhance wellbeing, foster social connections and provide essential support.

### Our Service Area

Our service boundary spans a significant area of Kent, centred on Ashford, and extends to encompass a wide range of rural villages, small towns and coastal communities. To the west, we support residents in places like Smarden, Biddenden, Bethersden, Pluckley, Frittenden and Tenterden, reaching as far as the border with Cranbrook. Moving north, our boundary includes Charing, Lenham and Stalisfield, connecting communities along key routes like the A20. Eastward, our area stretches through Kennington and Wye, then out to Elham, Etchinghill and the coastal areas of Saltwood, Hythe and parts of Folkestone, ensuring access for older people living both inland and by the sea. South of Ashford, we cover Kingsnorth, Hamstreet and the rural expanses reaching towards Newchurch and Romney Marsh.

By embracing such a diverse region, spanning busy market towns, isolated rural villages and seaside communities, we are committed to delivering essential services and tailored support to older people across varied settings, addressing the unique challenges faced in each locality.

# Age UK Hythe, Lyminge and Ashford Service Boundary



# Our Current Services and Activities

Age UK Hythe, Lyminge and Ashford provides the following core services and activities:



## 1) Social and Community-Based Services

These services foster social inclusion and community engagement:

- Community Meals
- Social events and regular gatherings to help people connect and reduce isolation
- Community cafés and social cafés
- Accessible spaces for local groups and activities
- Wellbeing activities

These services aim to prevent loneliness, introduce people to new skills and experiences, and help older individuals maintain their independence and community involvement.

## 2) Essential Services for Dignity and Wellbeing

Focused on meeting individual needs:

- Footcare/chiroscopy
- Advice and Information (benefits, housing, financial support and signposting)

These services are vital, often filling gaps where similar support is unavailable, inaccessible or unaffordable elsewhere.

## 3) Specialist Services

Targeted services that address complex needs, particularly around health and caregiving:

- Dementia Services: specialist support for individuals living with dementia and their families, including tailored activities and respite
- Respite Care: providing temporary relief for caregivers while ensuring quality care for the person supported

These services enhance quality of life for both older people and their carers.

## 4) Volunteering Opportunities

Volunteering is integral to our ethos and our capacity:

- Volunteers support activities, meals, transport, cafés and community connection
- Volunteering is also a service to volunteers themselves, offering purpose, skills development, social interaction and improved wellbeing
- A large proportion of volunteers are within the client age range, with some transitioning into clients as their needs evolve



## Benefits of Our Services and Activities



Age UK Hythe, Lyminge and Ashford offers numerous benefits through its services, with the most significant being:

- **Creating a safe and welcoming space** where individuals can connect, engage and unwind in a secure and accessible environment
- **Promoting independence and dignity** by helping people remain independent for as long as possible while ensuring dignity is upheld
- **Offering accessible, long-term and affordable services** that are not always available elsewhere
- **Reducing isolation through social interaction**, whether through structured events, cafés, or a friendly conversation during meal deliveries
- **Building trust** through consistent, compassionate delivery and strong local recognition over many decades

### Key Findings

- Sustained demand for core services: Community Meals, wellbeing, Independent Living and key dementia services.
- Significant variability in some services (notably dementia and footcare), requiring investigation.
- Seasonal patterns, with peak activity in winter for transport and meal services.
- Persistently low or inactive uptake in some services, indicating opportunities for revitalisation, adaptation or reallocation.

### Implications for 2026–2031

- Resource planning must anticipate peak winter demand
- Services prone to inconsistency require stabilisation and clearer pathways (e.g., referral routes)
- Data should support funding applications and demonstrate reliance
- Annual refresh of analysis will keep the strategy evidence-led and agile

### Recommendation

Develop visual dashboards of monthly trends and pair quantitative usage with qualitative feedback to understand engagement patterns and inform adjustments.

# Why We Exist Now: Need, Demand and Evidence

## What the Numbers Say (April 2023 to March 2025)

A comprehensive review of service delivery data from April 2023 to March 2025 has been conducted to inform the development of Age UK Hythe, Lyminge and Ashford's strategy for 2026–2031. This analysis provides key insights into service uptake, emerging trends, and areas for improvement.

### Data Summary

- **Community Wheels** is by far the largest-volume service, delivering over 131,000 meals across two years (average 3,657 per month) with stable usage month-to-month.
- **Wellbeing (Hythe and Lyminge)** and **Wellbeing (Ashford)** performed strongly, recording **19,300** and **30,900** total contacts respectively (monthly averages of 537–859), showing consistent community engagement.
- **Independent Living** averaged **365–419 contacts per month**, indicating steady reliance on support with daily tasks.
- **Day Centre Transport (HLA)** recorded **5,000 journeys** (average 193/month).
- **Dementia Services (HLA)** showed strong engagement (**9,563 uses**, average **266/month**) but also significant month-to-month variation (0 to 449), indicating potential inconsistencies in referrals or delivery.

# Supporting Our Community



# Strategic Engagement Survey (July 2025)



A strategic engagement survey was undertaken in July 2025 as part of our planning for the 2026–2031 period. More than 70 stakeholders took part across three groups: Service Users, Staff & Volunteers, and External Partners.

Across all groups, the survey showed strong satisfaction with our services, alongside clear priorities for the future:

- expanding outreach to underserved communities
- strengthening support for dementia and mental health
- enhancing inclusion and recognition for staff and volunteers
- deepening collaboration with health and care systems
- supporting digitally excluded older people

## 1) Service User Insights

Services are highly valued, particularly Community Wheels, day services and Independent Living. Respondents emphasised the importance of kindness, consistency and simplicity. There is growing interest in technology support and reducing loneliness.

### Key priorities from service users

- loneliness and social contact
- maintaining dignity and independence (help with forms, home support)
- affordability during the cost-of-living crisis
- transport from rural or outlying areas
- simple, non-judgemental digital help

### Illustrative quotes

- “Community Meals – keeps us alive!”
- “Would love tech classes – I don’t know how to set up my phone.”
- “The help I received enabled me to claim and receive certain benefits, to help me live a good and fulfilling life.”

## 2) Staff and Volunteer Insights

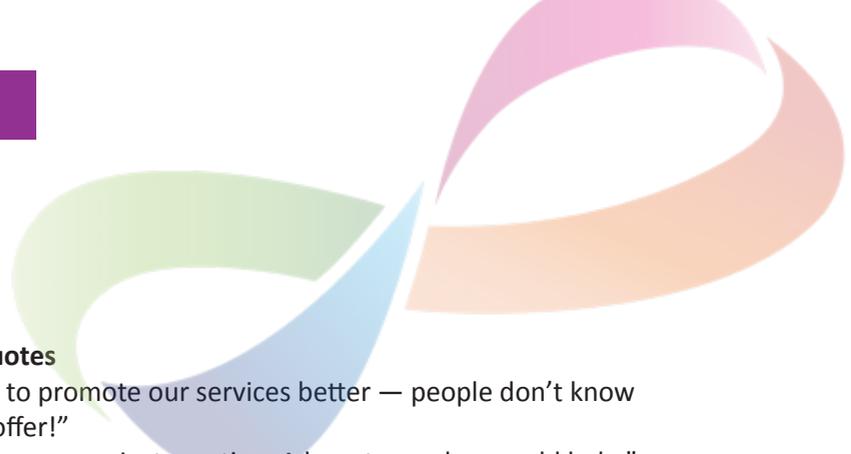
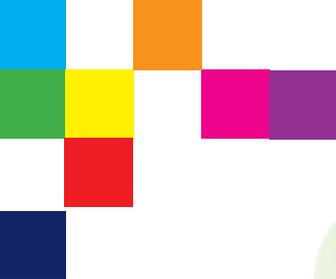
Staff and volunteers report pride and purpose, but want stronger organisational support and planning.

### Key strengths

- strong sense of compassion
- pride in dementia day care and Community Meals
- teamwork, especially in smaller hubs

### Suggestions for improvement

- greater visibility of leadership and long-term planning
- training in digital systems and mental health awareness
- enhanced marketing of underused services
- intergenerational projects (links with schools/youth groups)



# Challenges and Risks

Age UK Hythe, Lyminge and Ashford is currently facing multiple challenges impacting our ability to sustain and develop services.

### Financial and operational pressures

Financial constraints are compounded by reduced funding, rising wages, Employer National Insurance contributions and escalating utility costs. Grants, donations and legacies are unpredictable. Ageing infrastructure (buildings and vehicles) requires increasing maintenance, adding to the financial burden. Many older people are struggling to afford services, leading to reduced attendance. Competition and short-term commissioned services create uncertainty and additional pressure.

### Workforce and governance pressures

We face challenges with an ageing workforce (including staff and Trustees), requiring succession planning and renewed approaches to volunteer recruitment and retention.

### Brand and partnership constraints

Being a brand partner of Age UK provides significant benefits, credibility and access to national resources, but can also restrict flexibility. It can limit our ability to form certain commercial partnerships or work collaboratively with some non-Age UK organisations, as we must maintain brand consistency and adhere to national guidelines.

### Challenges identified through staff and volunteer feedback

- Pressure on staffing levels and time to meet growing demand
- Fragmented internal communication across locations
- Need for structured opportunities to influence strategy
- Emotional strain, especially in dementia and end-of-life work

These challenges inform our priorities on workforce stability, internal systems, co-design and wellbeing support.

### Illustrative quotes

- “We need to promote our services better — people don’t know what we offer!”
- “Sometimes we are just reacting. A long-term plan would help.”
- “I feel very included and part of something worthwhile.”
- “I love it, I feel like I am helping others doing something I enjoy, all while meeting new people and making new friends”.

## 3) External Partner Insights

Partners appreciate our values and empathy but report mixed awareness of specific services and strategic aims.

### Future needs and opportunities

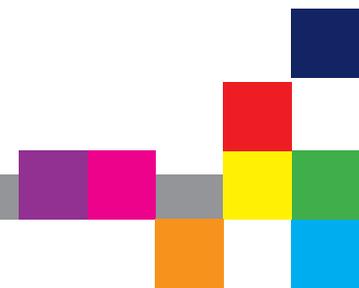
- co-design of inclusive creative health and prevention services
- focus on digitally excluded and socially isolated groups
- improved connections with local health systems (PCNs, ICBs)
- expand into the 55–70 age group with anticipatory services

### Illustrative quotes

- “Become a leading wellbeing hub for older adults.”
- “Champion the quality creative health agenda.”
- “There’s so much potential if you reach out to partners early.”

### Strategic themes emerging from all groups

- A. Delivering inclusive and impactful services
- B. Embedding community voice and co-design
- C. Enhancing outreach and partnerships
- D. Future-proofing access and inclusion



## Vision for 2026–2031

Our vision for 2025–2030 is to build stronger, more strategic connections with statutory organisations, particularly within health and social care sectors. By increasing engagement with health systems and Integrated Care Boards, we aim to align our services with local healthcare pathways so older people receive more coordinated, efficient and comprehensive support.

Strengthening these partnerships will enhance our ability to advocate for older people, improve service delivery and contribute to shaping future models of care. This collaborative approach will help Age UK Hythe, Lyminge and Ashford remain at the forefront of supporting older adults while continuing to adapt to an evolving health and social care landscape.



## A strategic United Ages of Kent (CIC): Collaboration for Scale and System Leadership

Age UK Hythe, Lyminge and Ashford is a founding and active member of United Ages of Kent (CIC), a county-wide partnership established with organisations across Kent to work collaboratively to build a better place to live for residents.

Through this structure, we are better positioned to:

- Participate in larger health and social care tenders
- Access collaborative grants and funding streams
- Align service standards and outcomes across Kent
- Provide a clearer single interface for commissioners where appropriate
- Strengthen mobilisation capacity for larger contracts

United Ages of Kent will bring together organisations beyond those solely focused on older people, supporting a more whole-system and preventative approach to supporting residents across Kent. By working collectively, we aim to reduce the postcode lottery of access to support and create greater consistency in provision.

We intend not only to participate in this partnership, but to help shape and lead its development, contributing our expertise in dementia, wellbeing, community meals and preventative services to a wider county model.

## Our Strategic Goals (2026–2031)

### 1. Sustainability

Secure long-term financial health by diversifying income streams and reducing reliance on uncertain funding.

### 2. Community Engagement

Strengthen partnerships with local organisations, health boards and businesses to improve service delivery and build support.

### 3. Service Development

Develop and adapt services to meet the evolving needs of an ageing population across towns, villages and rural communities.

### 4. Innovation

Improve quality and efficiency through better use of systems, data, and practical innovation in delivery models.

### 5. Volunteer Growth

Increase recruitment and retention through training, support and recognition, protecting volunteers as a core organisational asset.

### 6. Brand Evolution

Shift perception of Age UK locally as modern, inclusive and dynamic, expanding reach and strengthening community trust and engagement.

## Our Service and Income Priorities (2026–2031)

To remain sustainable while meeting rising demand, we will manage our work through two linked priority lenses, while keeping some services under review at sustainable levels.

### A) Impact-Critical Services (protected and strengthened)

These services deliver the greatest direct impact for older people and will be protected and developed throughout the strategic period:

- Dementia Services
- Wellbeing Services
- Community Meals
- Information and Advice

### B) Sustainability and Community Gateway Services (developed to strengthen resilience)

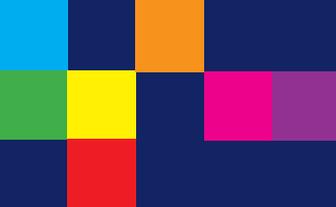
These activities are essential to long-term resilience, visibility and community connection. They will be actively reviewed and developed to maximise income, footfall, awareness and engagement:

- Charity retail (including online retail opportunities)
- Community cafés and social cafés
- Community presence activity that increases awareness and referrals

### C) Services maintained at sustainable levels (kept under review)

Some services remain valued and needed, but must be delivered at a level we can sustain within staffing, funding and infrastructure constraints. We will maintain these services where viable, adapting delivery models as needed:

- Independent Living
- Other local activities and targeted offers (subject to demand, capacity and funding alignment)



## Marketing and Promotion of Our Services

We take a proactive and multi-channel approach to promoting our services, ensuring information reaches older people, carers, professionals and the wider community.

Our website provides an accessible hub for up-to-date details on our services, events and support. We actively use social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram and X to share news, raise awareness and engage. We attend marketplace events and wellbeing showcases across the area to speak directly with people, families and partners. To support referrals, we also share regular updates with GP practices and health and social care practitioners.

Looking ahead, we will strengthen both our digital and community engagement efforts by:

- increasing video content (service user stories and behind-the-scenes features)
- improving website navigation and pathways to support
- growing our presence at local and regional events
- developing a dedicated professionals' newsletter and hosting briefings/webinars on our services

These steps will help raise awareness, increase referrals and connect more people to the help they need.

## Innovation and Digital Enablement (2026–2031)

Innovation will be a practical tool to help us: protect core services, improve consistency and quality, and strengthen sustainability.

### Our approach to innovation will focus on:

- **Service accessibility and inclusion:** expanding support for digitally excluded older people through simple, non-judgemental digital help, signposting and confidence-building.
- **Smarter ways of working:** improving internal communication and consistency across locations through shared processes, structured team communication, and better use of our CRM to track need, outcomes and follow-up.
- **Measuring impact better:** strengthening routine outcomes reporting so we can demonstrate value clearly to funders, commissioners, Trustees and the public.
- **Income and community reach:** developing retail and café models, including online opportunities, to increase unrestricted income and visibility.

### Innovation across the strategic timeframe

- **2026–2027 (Stabilise):** improve systems, internal communications and consistency; establish baseline measures and dashboards.
- **2026–2028 (Develop):** expand high-impact services where demand is proven; strengthen outreach; develop digital inclusion offers; improve partnership pathways.
- **2028–2031 (Transform):** embed an Ashford hub model (subject to investment) and scale what works across our geography.

# Roadmap and Measures of Success (2025–2030)

We will deliver this strategy through a phased roadmap. Progress will be reviewed quarterly by the Board, with an annual public summary.

## Phase 1: Stabilise and Focus (2026–2027)

### Key initiatives

- Protect capacity in Impact-Critical Services (dementia, wellbeing, meals, advice).
- Establish consistent internal communications across locations (routine briefings, shared planning, feedback loops).
- Strengthen wellbeing support and reflective practice for staff and volunteers in emotionally demanding roles.
- Create simple performance dashboards using CRM data (activity, outcomes and demand trends).
- Formalise governance and representation within United Ages of Kent (CIC) and ensure organisational bid-readiness for collaborative tenders.
- Align impact measurement and reporting frameworks to support joint commissioning opportunities.

### Measures of success

- Improved staffing stability indicators (retention, reduced vacancies and operational gaps).
- Improved internal communication results (staff survey measures; fewer missed handovers and avoidable issues).
- Service continuity in core services (capacity maintained; reduced disruption).
- Baseline outcomes reporting in place and used for decision-making.

## Phase 2: Develop and Expand (2026–2028)

### Key initiatives

- Expand or enhance priority services in response to demand and seasonal need.
- Strengthen referral routes and partnership pathways with health and social care systems (PCNs, ICBs, KCC and others).
- Implement targeted outreach to underserved villages and socially isolated groups.
- Develop Sustainability and Gateway Services: retail and cafés (including online retail), with clear net contribution targets and visibility goals.
- Participate in collaborative tenders and grant applications through United Ages of Kent.
- Contribute to the development of shared preventative and community-based models across Kent.

### Measures of success

- Increased engagement from underserved communities and improved referral patterns.
- Stronger partner engagement: clearer referral routes, joint initiatives and better awareness of our service offer.
- Evidence of outcomes improvement (wellbeing, independence, reduced isolation).
- Increased unrestricted income and improved net contribution from retail/ café activity.

## Phase 3: Transform and Embed (2028–2031)

### Key initiatives

- Progress the Ashford Community Support Hub ambition (subject to investment and partnership).
- Embed co-design and community voice structures into routine planning and service improvement.
- Scale successful models across the service area, including outreach and inclusion approaches.

### Measures of success

- Hub milestones achieved (agreed plan, investment, delivery stages completed).
- Community voice model operating and demonstrably influencing decisions (documented changes).
- Sustained organisational resilience through diversified income and strengthened partnerships.

## Ashford Community Support Hub Vision

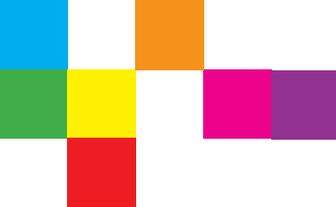
A key long-term ambition within this strategy is the development of the Ashford centre into a Community Support Hub, offering integrated advice, support, a café and a charity shop.

This ambition is rooted in:

- the potential to increase accessibility and visibility in Ashford
- stronger pathways into Information and Advice and wellbeing support
- a sustainable model that combines community connection with income generation

The Hub will require significant investment and close partnership with Ashford Borough Council and other stakeholders. It will be developed alongside evidence of demand, feasibility planning, and a clear business case.





## Governance, Review and Accountability

We will ensure this strategy remains active and accountable by:

- Reviewing progress quarterly at Board level using agreed indicators and dashboard reporting
- Publishing an annual summary of progress and learning
- Refreshing the internal Business Plan annually (budgets, workforce, income, risks) to align delivery with conditions and capacity
- Using service data and stakeholder insight to guide adjustment, including annual refresh of service demand analysis
- Maintaining a clear line of sight from day-to-day delivery to strategic goals, with Trustees and senior leadership jointly responsible for performance and learning

### Conclusion

Age UK Hythe, Lyminge and Ashford finds itself at a critical juncture, where funding losses and rising costs have necessitated a shift in priorities. Increasing demand from our core client group, combined with financial constraints, means we must focus on services that deliver the greatest impact while building a more sustainable model for the future.

We will prioritise Impact-Critical services, dementia, wellbeing, community meals and Information and Advice, while also developing Sustainability and Community Gateway services such as our charity shops and cafés, recognising their essential role in resilience, community engagement and unrestricted income.

By concentrating on what we do well, avoiding projects beyond our capabilities or our community's needs, and ensuring we do not pursue funding that drives work away from our mission, we will maintain a clear and consistent strategic direction.

Our long-term goal is to reduce dependency on external funding by diversifying income and investing in services that deliver both immediate value and long-term benefit. Through this approach, we will build a more resilient organisation, able to continue supporting older people to live well within their communities across Hythe, Lyminge, Ashford and beyond.

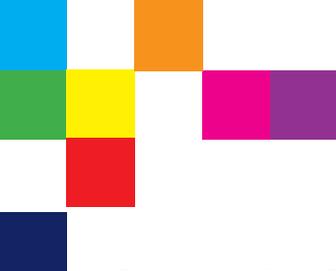
## Appendix A: What We Have Done (Recent Decisions and Developments)

In 2023–2024, to ensure long-term sustainability and effectiveness, we engaged external consultants to review finances and assess services on an individual basis. This analysis provided valuable insights into financial health and service efficiency, enabling informed decisions about the future direction of our work.

One of the most difficult decisions during this period was the closure of the Lyminge building. This was necessary due to increasing operational costs, declining funding, and the building's maintenance requirements beyond our financial capability. Services previously offered there, including dementia day care, physical activities and transport, were carefully relocated and integrated into Hythe and Ashford to maintain support while ensuring sustainability.

We also commissioned external support to strengthen our marketing, refining messaging, improving our digital presence and developing campaigns to reach a wider audience, attract donors and sustain and grow services.

In addition, we updated our website using the national Age UK platform. While the platform limits some customisation, it provides a more standardised structure and improved accessibility, enabling easier access to information about services, events and fundraising opportunities.



## Appendix B: Background and History (Summary)

### Hythe

Age Concern Hythe traces its roots to the early 1940s with the establishment of the National Old People's Welfare Committee. Locally, Age Concern Hythe was founded on 13 February 1948 as the Borough of Hythe Old People's Welfare Committee, later renamed Age Concern Hythe in 1975. It was initially run entirely by volunteers until the appointment of a paid Chief Officer. The committee included representatives from local organisations and community groups.

In the 1960s, the committee purchased Tynwald Residential Home. By 1976, Tynwald became independent, and Age Concern Hythe expanded into Romney Marsh, opening offices and a daycare centre. By the 1980s, Romney Marsh established its own committee and Hythe refocused. The Hythe office moved from shared premises with Citizens Advice to Sanford House. By the mid-1980s, a small daycare centre was opened at Mackeson Court. Increased demand led to an expansion of Sanford House in 1989. Hythe Town Council contributed £36,000, and £94,000 was raised through fundraising. Capacity increased to 50 clients daily. Services expanded to include meals, hairdressing, foot care, bathing and domestic support. In 1997, a Personal Care Service launched to help with daily tasks.

### Lyminge (Elham Rural)

Since 1977, Age Concern Elham Rural operated the Jubilee Day Centre in Lyminge, a registered 35-place day centre supporting around 40 clients, many with high dependency needs. A minibus service supported isolated clients across 15 villages. Volunteers were crucial, though declining numbers increased reliance on paid staff. Fundraising and strong community ties (schools, churches) helped sustain the centre.

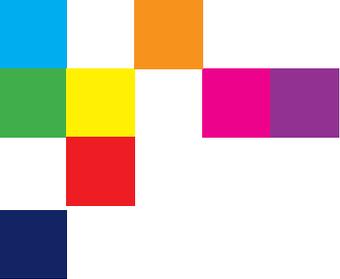
In 2009–2010, Age Concern Elham Rural and Age Concern Hythe developed a collaborative partnership. This led to a formal merger in 2011, adopting the name Age UK Hythe and Lyminge, aligning with national developments as Age Concern and Help the Aged united to form Age UK.

### Ashford

The Joe Fagg Community Centre, named after founder Joe Fagg, began as a welcoming space offering day care, meals, transport and welfare advice, including a popular Pop-In Centre. As needs grew, the original building became unfit for purpose and was demolished, leading to a move to Farrow Court. The organisation evolved into Age Concern Ashford and became part of the Age UK network in 2011.

### Hythe, Lyminge and Ashford

Age UK Hythe and Lyminge and Age UK Ashford first partnered in 2017 to share resources and strengthen services. During Covid-19, buildings closed to the public; in response, the Hythe Hub was opened as a community service to support the wider area. Funding enabled operations and reserves through the pandemic period. In 2024, after years of collaboration, the organisations formally merged to create **Age UK Hythe, Lyminge and Ashford**, strengthening impact, broadening reach and streamlining operations during a period of increased demand and reduced funding.



## Appendix C: Formation of the Strategy (Methodology)

This strategy was crafted through a comprehensive and evidence-led process, drawing on live and up-to-date data to ensure that decisions reflected the current realities facing our organisation and the communities we serve.

We conducted extensive surveys engaging staff, volunteers, clients, partners and the wider public, providing critical insight into needs, expectations and emerging trends. To understand impact, we applied the Kent Impact Model to support structured assessment of outcomes. Trustees undertook a rigorous review of service delivery against budgets, considering local and national demand, and reflecting on wider campaigns and policy developments affecting older people.

We analysed the competitive landscape to identify gaps and opportunities, with a conscious decision to avoid unnecessary competition, focus on what we do well, and avoid projects beyond our capabilities or the needs of our community. We are equally committed to not seeking funding that would lead us to create projects simply to fit funding criteria, ensuring initiatives remain aligned with our mission and genuinely benefit those we serve.

This holistic approach has ensured that our strategy is rooted in real-world experience, aligned with financial sustainability, and positioned to adapt to future challenges.





**We have a single number for all enquiries**

**01303 269602**

**or email [admin@ageukhla.org.uk](mailto:admin@ageukhla.org.uk)**

If you would like to call in for a chat, visit one of our Support Hubs.



### **Age UK Hythe**

Hythe Community Support Hub  
Sanford House, Stade Street, Hythe, CT21 6BD.



### **Age UK Ashford**

Ashford Community Support Hub  
Farrow Court, Stanhope Road, Ashford, TN23 5RF.

**[www.ageuk.org.uk/hythelymingeashford](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/hythelymingeashford)**



**@AgeUKHL**



**@ageukhythelymingeandashford**



**@ageukhla**