

Welcome to our winter newsletter, we'd like to start by wishing you all a very Happy New Year! We hope you all had a happy and healthy festive season.

Christmas is always a busy time for us - we have been attending events, raising money and increasing awareness of the services we offer in our Borough of Maidstone. Read on to find out what we've been up to, how you have all made a difference and what events are coming up over the next couple of months.



Clients at Shepway Court enjoying just one of our Day Centre Christmas parties!

More on page 3

30th January**Boxing For Older People****2-3pm at Mote Park Leisure Centre, Maidstone.**

Free taster sessions for over 55's and carers. For all abilities and fitness levels. Gets you fit, controls weight management, builds strength/co-ordination, improves confidence and helps socialise and meet new people.

**11th Jan, 8th Feb
& 8th March****Memory Matters Cafe****10—12 at Starbucks, King Street, Maidstone.**

The Memory Matters Café is a safe place for people living with dementia, their families and carers to participate in monthly meet-ups. 2nd Friday of every month.

**14th Jan, 11th Feb &
11h March****Harpers Monday Meet-up****10:30—12 at 12 Market Buildings, Maidstone, ME14 1HP.**

Pop along to Harpers on the 2nd Monday of every month for a coffee & a chat. The West Kent Befriending Service will be there, so you can be sure of a friendly face to chat to.

**Every other Monday
Dates on page 8****Knit 2gether Group****10—12 at The Community Hub in The Mall, Maidstone.**

Every other Monday our new knitting group, Knit 2gether, gathers for a creative morning, a chat and some tea and biscuits. Just bring your knitting needles and wool!

A day that suits you!**SAKS Academy—49 Earl Street Maidstone, ME14 1PD**

SAKS are teaming up with us to offer Age UK Maidstone clients a complimentary cut/shampoo. Go and get yourself pampered while enjoying a nice cup of tea and some company. Call 01622 691916 to book an appointment.

Christmas Raffle

We'd like to say a big thank you to all of our lovely clients and supporters that purchased a ticket for our Christmas raffle. And of course the local companies that donated fantastic prizes!

The draw took place on December 7th at Shepway Court day centre. Together, everyone raised a fantastic £1,234.53! This money allows Age UK Maidstone to keep its charitable services running.

A list of prizes and winning ticket numbers is on page 9 of this newsletter.

Christmas lunches

In December we held our day centre Christmas parties. Our clients all had a fab time and enjoyed a delicious turkey dinner with all the trimmings.

A huge thank you to Maidstone Borough Council for their donations towards the festive parties. And to the Kent Police Property Fund whose donation paid for the entertainment at The Goodman Centre!

Carol singing

On Thursday 13th December we took to The Mall for our annual Christmas singing. This year we were joined by three fantastic school choirs—East Farleigh Primary school, Sandling Primary School and Invicta Grammar School. A big thank you to them for helping us to spread Christmas cheer and to the volunteers who agreed to join us and hold buckets and warble a tune or two!

A fabulously festive time was had by all and your generous donations throughout the day came to £216.29.



Our Knitting Superstars!

Every year we take part in The Big Knit in collaboration with Innocent Smoothies. It's a really fun way to raise money for us!

We ask you to knit us tiny woolly hats to be placed on Innocent Smoothie bottles in the supermarket. For every bottle sold Age UK receive 25p from the sale.

You always amaze us with your creative designs. We've had squirrels, cats, strawberries and minions to name just a few! We'd like to give a special mention to some of our top knitters. Carol and Velsha (top) delivered an impressive 257 hats so far between them. Doreen Pfeiffer (bottom) is another long-term knitter—she's given us over 100 hats every year!

At the time of writing this newsletter, we have received 1,450— so close to our 2,000 hat target! Thank you all so much for your incredible support, without it we simply couldn't offer the befriending service to as many people as we do.

We're always accepting donations of little hats to our office at 7 Mill Street, so it's not too late if you'd like to get involved! You'll find a basic knitting pattern on page 10 of this newsletter.



Our new Knitting Group



Have you heard about our new knitting group, Knit 2gether?

Two new volunteers joined us at the end of the year, the wonderfully creative Nerys and Molly. They have kindly agreed to run a knitting group for us on a fortnightly basis!

We meet every other Monday at The Community Hub in The Mall, located next to Zippy Stitch on the upper level. We meet from 10am-12pm. A full list of upcoming dates can be seen on page 8. Any questions at all just give us a call on 01622 753618 and we'll be happy to help.

It doesn't matter what your level of ability is, come along and enjoy some company and learn something new!

Thank You!

Your generous donations to the foot clinic have allowed us to purchase both a Doppler and a drill! These tools have greatly improved the care and comfort of our patients. Thank you so much for your continued support of our foot care service!



The Friendship Lunch

Sue Hay has been a volunteer with the Befriending Service for three years. She is also the Chairperson of the Tangent Club, an organisation for ladies with a focus on making friends and supporting local and national causes. A year or so ago, Sue approached us with the idea of organising an event for the members and volunteers of our West Kent Befriending Service. We decided on a Friendship Lunch!

We welcomed over sixty people to the Grove Green Community Hall on Saturday 3rd November. The hall was decorated with bunting and the tables laid with tablecloths, pretty china and a small bunches of flowers. The Tangent ladies had clearly been busy making soup and savoury scones, followed by a large variety of homemade cakes.

The Lunch was a huge success and a real highlight for members and volunteers alike. A huge thank you to Sue and the Tangent ladies for making it such a special event and putting a smile on our members' faces!



The Talking Bus

The Talking Bus returned on Wednesday 14th November after our first trip that was such a success—we even made it onto the television! Since then we have been working with Arriva to arrange a day out for our members and volunteers.

For this trip we boarded the number 12 to Tenterden, at the request of our VIP passenger Norma. She had been desperately looking forward to the previous Talking Bus but was sadly taken into hospital a few days before and could not come. As you can see, she had a fantastic time on this visit!

Once we arrived in Tenterden, we made our way to The Secret Pantry for a delicious lunch before another chatty journey home on the bus.

This will be a regular event now we have proved it is wanted. Thanks to all those volunteers who came along to help and those who brought your friends along too.

We will provide details on upcoming buses as soon as we have them!



Knit 2gether

Our new knitting group meets every other Monday at The Community Hub in The Mall, Maidstone. You'll find us on the upper level next to Zippy Stitch. Whatever your ability, come along to get creative and have a good natter!



Upcoming dates for this season:

- Monday 7th January
- Monday 21st January
- Monday 4th February
- Monday 18th February
- Monday 4th March
- Monday 18th March

01622 753618

Volunteer with us!

Volunteering is an excellent way to give back to your community, gain new skills and become a part of an inspiring experience.

Whether it's assisting our clients at the day care centres, jumping behind the wheel of our minibuses or regularly visiting a lonely or isolated person. We are always looking for new volunteers and would love to hear from you!

- ☺ Mini bus driver/escort
- ☺ Office support
- ☺ Dementia Day Care Assistant
- ☺ Befriender
- ☺ Information and Advice Helper
- ☺ Computer/tablet tutor

Visit our website:

www.ageuk.org.uk/Maidstone/get-involved/volunteer

Or call us on 01622 753618

Prize	Donated By	Winning ticket
£200	Age UK Maidstone	00610
£100	Age UK Maidstone	04083
£50	Age UK Maidstone	04182
2 course meal for 2 with a bottle of wine	ASK Italian Maidstone	07913
Ladies satin pyjamas and luxury candle	Mandy Parker	08341
Large mirrored photo frame	Love Home & Garden	08403
Bottle of red wine (Fleurie)	Councillor David Naghi Mayor Of Maidstone	14114
Bottle of champagne	Office	19306
Argon oil shampoo and hair mask	Flying Tiger	04164
Card and dice games gift set	Mike Akhlaq - Trustee	06183
£25 voucher	Frederic's Bistro	11591
Potted Orchid	Mr Flower	06639
Large box of Thorntons Chocolates	Iceland	00883
£20 Voucher	Harpers Coffee & Gifts	02912
Free Match Tickets	Maidstone United FC	06686
£60 voucher	Cote Brasserie	02425
Giant box of shortbread	Iceland	01913
Bottle of White Wine	Office	00369
Festive tea towel and oven glove set	Kay Chapman	07464

A huge thank you once again to all of the companies and individuals that donated prizes!

If you'd like to keep up with all of our latest news and events as they happen, follow us on social media:



Age Uk Maidstone



@ageukmaidstone

What is an ig?

A snow house without a loo!

Z W N U H G H A G J
L R O K Z X H M B A
E O S N J J V P T N
D Y F M S T A R F U
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C Q L L T X P R B I
L L C G S Z T N G H
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CHILLY

FROST

JANUARY

SNOW

HAPPY NEW YEAR

We are still accepting little knitted hats as part of our Big Knit Campaign. Hats can be donated to our office at 7 Mill Street!

Basic Knitting Pattern

You need: wool, small knitting needles (3¼ mm—4mm), sewing needle, scissors and some bobbles (optional).

1. Using double knitting yarn and some small needles, cast on 28 stitches.
2. Knit 2 rows. Then, starting with a knit row, work in stocking stitch (knit 1 row, purl 1 row, knit 1 row etc) for 12 more rows.
3. For the next row, knit 2 together to the end (14 stitches). And for the row after that, purl 2 together to the end (7 stitches).
4. When you've finished, cut the yarn leaving about 25 cm. Thread the cut end of the yarn through a sewing needle, then run it through the loops and remove the knitting needle.
5. Tighten the yarn (fig. B) and sew the little hat together at the side (fig. C). Once finished, turn it right-side out so that the seam you've just sewn runs up the inside.
6. The hat dimensions should be 5-7cm along the bottom and around 3cm high. You can now sew on a bobble if you wish!