

# Memory loss and dementia - practical and local help

Amended June 2023

This local information pack covers a selection of organisations providing help and support for people with memory loss and dementia.

We would like to thank the Alzheimer's Society and Dementia UK for much of the information in this information pack.

Details are subject to change, please check with the organisation concerned. If you cannot find what you are looking for please contact us as we may be able to help further. Amendments and additions are also welcome.

We publish other local information packs covering:

- Care agencies and support for carers
- Care homes
- Health and wellbeing
- Help at home
- Housing
- Legal advice and power of attorney
- Money matters
- Social activities
- Transport, travel and leisure

Age UK Sevenoaks & Tonbridge is a registered charity no. 1088213

01732 454108 [www.ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](http://www.ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk)

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## Information and Advice on memory loss

**Age UK.** 01732 454108 [office@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](mailto:office@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk)  
[www.ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](http://www.ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk) We provide many different services:

- Free information & advice
- Help filling in forms. We can help you at our office or we may be able to visit you or arrange for the Department for Work & Pensions to visit you
- Independent Living Support including welfare calls, housework, shopping etc
- Dementia day care
  - Sevenoaks area. Hollybush Day Centre 01732 741558. £45 + transport
  - Swanley area. Try the Cottage Community 01474 879473 or Age UK North West Kent 01474 564898
  - Tonbridge area. Town Lock Day Centre 01732 454108. £45
- Dementia outreach at home (personalised activities to provide stimulation)
  - Edenbridge, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, West Malling and Westerham areas 01732 454108 From £22.50 per hour
  - Swanley area. Try Age UK North West Kent 01474 564898
- Befriending
  - Edenbridge, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Westerham areas 01732 454108
  - Swanley area. Try Age UK North West Kent 01474 564898
- Chiropody and toenail cutting
  - Sevenoaks area. Hollybush Day Centre 01732 741558. From £24
  - Swanley area. Try Age UK North West Kent 01474 564898
  - Tonbridge area. Town Lock Day Centre 01732 454108. From £24
- Adaptations, aids and equipment in Sevenoaks District. James Keast 07864 959141
- Home bathing
  - Sevenoaks, Westerham and Edenbridge areas. Ask Kathy in Independent Living Support at Age UK 01732 454108 to put you in touch with people.
  - Swanley area. Try Age UK North West Kent 01474 564898
- Handyperson in Swanley area. Try Age UK North West Kent 01474 564898
- Escorted hospital appointments in Swanley area. Try Age UK North West Kent 01474 564898
- Meals on wheels in Swanley area. Try Age UK North West Kent 01474 564898
- Publications on care, getting help, living with dementia and research 0800 169 6565

**Alzheimer's & Dementia Support Services.** Independent charity covering Sevenoaks, Swanley and Tonbridge 0800 035 2221, 01474 533990 [info@alz-dem.org](mailto:info@alz-dem.org) [www.alz-dem.org](http://www.alz-dem.org)

- Concerns about your memory
- Support to help you live well with dementia
- Advice for carers, families and friends
- Keeping active and social

**Alzheimer's Research UK.** Free information on symptoms, diagnosis and treatments for Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, dementia with Lewy bodies and fronto-temporal dementia 0300 111 5333 [enquiries@alzheimersresearchuk.org](mailto:enquiries@alzheimersresearchuk.org)  
[www.alzheimersresearchuk.org](http://www.alzheimersresearchuk.org)

**Alzheimer's Society.** Information and advice on Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. National helpline 9am to 8pm Mon-Wed, 9am to 5pm Thu-Fri and 10am to 4pm weekends 0333 150 3456 [helpline@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:helpline@alzheimers.org.uk)  
[www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk) Local dementia advisors Christine Warren and Su Kibbey. They can help people who have had a diagnosis of dementia, or are in the process of receiving a diagnosis. They provide support to understand what a diagnosis may mean for you and your family and can provide useful information for you, your family and friends. [westkent@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:westkent@alzheimers.org.uk)

**Brains Matter (formerly Headway).** Support and information for individuals, carers and loved ones living with memory loss caused by a traumatic or acquired brain injury.

- Local support group meets in cafe at Stag Community Arts Centre, London Rd, Sevenoaks on 1<sup>st</sup> Wed of each month 1.30-3pm
- Regular activities and drop-in at Tunbridge Wells, a drop-in centre at Maidstone and one-to-one support 01892 619001 [info@brainsmatter.org.uk](mailto:info@brainsmatter.org.uk)  
[www.brainsmatter.org.uk](http://www.brainsmatter.org.uk)

**Citizens' Advice.** Free phone advice Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. Some office appointments may be possible.

- Aylesford, Larkfield, New Ash Green, Otford, Sevenoaks, Snodland, Swanley and Tonbridge 0808 278 7810
- Edenbridge and Westerham 0808 278 7962

**Dementia Friendly Kent.** Information about Kent's Dementia Friendly Communities. Contact Laura Summers or Jo Evans 07885 97774, 07825 712701  
[dementiafriendlykent@kent.gov.uk](mailto:dementiafriendlykent@kent.gov.uk) [laura.summers2@kent.gov.uk](mailto:laura.summers2@kent.gov.uk)  
[www.dementiafriendlykent.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriendlykent.org.uk)

**Dementia UK.** Publishes lots of leaflets which may help with specific practical issues. 0800 888 6678 [helpline@dementiauk.org](mailto:helpline@dementiauk.org) [www.dementiauk.org](http://www.dementiauk.org)

**Guideposts.** Help people with dementia and other long-term or degenerative conditions find out about care and support services. Helpline 0300 222 5709  
[hereinfo@guideposts.org.uk](mailto:hereinfo@guideposts.org.uk) [www.guideposts.org.uk](http://www.guideposts.org.uk)

**Independent Age.** Provide information about getting and paying for social care and welfare benefits 0800 319 6789 [advice@independentage.org](mailto:advice@independentage.org)  
[www.independentage.org](http://www.independentage.org)

**Kent Dementia Helpline.** They can provide information and advice both before and after a diagnosis 0800 500 3014 (24-hour freephone)  
[www.dementiafriendlykent.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriendlykent.org.uk) The helpline is for anyone who is affected by dementia – individuals, family and friends – in fact anyone who has questions or concerns and would like to have someone to talk to. It is confidential. You can talk to

someone 24 hours but if you want information and support or to find out about relevant local services they will need to ring you back or email you during office hours

**Recognition Health.** If you can afford it, this is a private company offering treatment and support. If you have private medical insurance, you will need to be referred by your GP and insurer. If you are paying for treatment yourself, contact directly 020 3355 3536 [referrals@re-cognitionhealth.com](mailto:referrals@re-cognitionhealth.com) [www.recognitionhealth.com](http://www.recognitionhealth.com)

**Samaritans.** 24-hour listening service for anyone feeling life is not worth living, and wanting to talk to someone 116123 [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

**Silver Line.** Free confidential helpline providing information and advice to older people and telephone befriending 0800 470 8090 [www.thesilverline.org.uk](http://www.thesilverline.org.uk)

## What is the difference between memory loss and dementia?

- **Memory loss.** It is natural to forget things sometimes, especially as we get older when short-term memory gradually declines. For example most of us sometimes forget a PIN number or our keys. However you or your family may be worried that you are getting more confused than would be normal or that your recent memory is getting noticeably worse. Examples could be forgetting what happened earlier in the day, not being able to recall a conversation 5 minutes ago, being repetitive, forgetting the way home from the shops or buying the same loaf of bread from the local shop several times in a day.
- **Temporary confusion.** There are many things which can cause confusion temporarily but will get better if treated. For example, UTIs (urinary tract infections), vitamin deficiencies, diabetes, thyroid problems or depression can cause temporary delusions or delirium. Ring Dementia UK on 0800 888 6678 for their leaflet on delirium
- **Mild cognitive impairment.** If the problems are not severe and you are managing well it may be what is known as Mild Cognitive Impairment. If you have this it does not mean that you will get dementia though there is an increased risk.
- **Dementia.** Dementia is a progressive decline in mental ability. It is the most well-known type of memory loss but it is not just about memory and sometimes memory may not be the most obvious difficulty. Dementia is not temporary and over a period of time it is likely to get worse. Medication may be able to slow it down or alleviate its effects but it cannot be stopped or cured yet. Ring Dementia UK on 0800 888 6678 for their leaflet on what is dementia?
- **Difficulty understanding because of your hearing.** If you think you may have hearing difficulties you should have an in-depth hearing test to find out whether your hearing is affecting your understanding. Ring Dementia UK on 0800 888 6678 for their leaflet on difficulty with sounds

## Diagnosis

**Talking to your GP.** If you feel that your everyday life is being affected then talk to your GP. You don't have to go alone and can take a member of your family or friend for support. It may not be dementia as there are many types of memory loss as well as temporary confusion, hearing difficulties and mild cognitive impairment. Your GP will usually ask you for background information, carry out blood or urine tests and do a short mental test. They will ask you to state what day and date it is, name some common items and remember something to test concentration and short-term memory. They may also do a chest X-ray if necessary. If your GP rules out physical problems then they will probably refer you to a memory clinic for further investigation.

**The Memory Clinic - how they make a diagnosis.** This is where specialists can assess your memory. It is likely to be held at Darent House next to Sevenoaks Hospital. They will take a detailed medical and family history from you and confirm the details with a family member. So it is helpful if someone who knows you well goes to the appointment, and has a conversation with the person conducting the assessment to help with this process, or writes a short letter outlining what the issues are. They will try to find out if you have memory loss by doing a series of tests. The standard one is called a MMSE (mini mental state examination). They will ask you questions to try and test your attention, memory, verbal fluency, language and visuo-spatial abilities. They will also ask questions about your ability to do everyday living tasks such as shopping, housework, looking after yourself and driving. If you have memory problems, the memory clinic will try to find out if it is dementia and what type. They may request an MRI or CT scan to examine your brain. Ring Dementia UK on 0800 888 6678 for their leaflet on getting a diagnosis

**Why it is important to get a diagnosis.** Diagnosis can be difficult as there is a natural tendency to try to do well in assessments. If they are unable to reach a definite diagnosis and you or your family are still worried you should keep a diary of what you are finding difficult then ask your GP to refer you again. Getting a diagnosis is not compulsory but may help:

- it can be a relief to know what your condition actually is and why things are changing. It may benefit your family enabling them to understand what is happening and how they can help.
- it helps you to get the best treatment, support and plans in place as soon as possible including finances, legal issues and making decision.
- it can help you stay well for longer by increasing your awareness of your condition and how you and your family can make adjustments to improve the quality of your life.
- it can help you use medication and other treatment to manage and lessen the symptoms
- it may be easier to get a diagnosis at an early stage than at a more advanced stage.

### **If you want a second opinion**

- If you want a second opinion, in particular for rarer forms of dementia, then you can ask your GP to refer you to the National Hospital for Neurology &

Neurosurgery, Queen Square, London WC1N 3BG 0845 155 5000, 020 3456 7890 [www.uclh.nhs.uk](http://www.uclh.nhs.uk)

- If you can afford it, you could ask for a private opinion, for example from Recognition Health. If you have private medical insurance, you will need to be referred by your GP and insurer. If you are paying for treatment yourself, contact directly 020 3355 3536 [referrals@re-cognitionhealth.com](mailto:referrals@re-cognitionhealth.com) [www.recognitionhealth.com](http://www.recognitionhealth.com)

**Difficulties visiting the GP.** If you care for someone with memory problems and they are reluctant to get a diagnosis you could try the following:

- giving them reassurance that their symptoms may be due to another potentially treatable condition eg physical illness, depression or infection
- explaining that they can choose not to be told the result and that they can also choose who else is told the result
- contacting their GP to explain the situation and ask if they would do a home visit to help to persuade the person to have an examination of the symptoms
- asking the GP to invite the person in for a general health check which could include looking at their memory problems

For more information about how to persuade someone to get a diagnosis contact Sevenoaks Community Mental Health Team for Older People 01732 228242. [www.kmpt.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia/6566](http://www.kmpt.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia/6566)

**If the GP won't refer you to the Memory Clinic.** If you are experiencing difficulty with your GP try ringing 0300 222 0123. The person you are referring will need to be aware that you are referring them and give their consent for you to do so. Further help may be available from Dementia UK 0800 888 6678 [direct@dementiauk.org](mailto:direct@dementiauk.org) [helpline@dementiauk.org](mailto:helpline@dementiauk.org)

## Treatment

The Memory Clinic will be able to talk you through potential treatment and support. For example, although most forms of dementia cannot be cured, medication is available for some types of dementia that can temporarily alleviate some of the symptoms and it is possible to continue to lead an active, fulfilling life. In addition cognitive stimulation activities may help and other treatment may be available if the person is depressed, agitated, anxious or aggressive. Research is ongoing although there is no cure at present. However scientists have now identified different variants of dementia requiring different treatment so this makes it important to have an accurate diagnosis. New drugs are being tested over the next 5 years in clinical trials. If you would like to know more about research please see the end of this information pack.

## Symptoms of dementia

Dementia is a collection of symptoms caused by diseases such as Alzheimer's. It can involve any combination of the following:

- thinking and memory - you may forget recent things; dementia particularly affects short-term memory so long-term memory is usually still quite good. This could include having a short attention span or becoming disorientated
- concentration or difficulty planning and organising

- making decisions or problem solving
- daily tasks become very difficult (getting dressed, cooking a meal etc)
- language - it is increasingly difficult to follow a conversation or difficulties with particular words. You may have problems understanding, expressing yourself or finding the right words for things. This could include describing the function of an item or making complex hand movements rather than simply naming it
- visual and spatial skills - this could include difficulty judging distance or recognising images or seeing things in 3D even though your eyes are fine
- orientation - losing track of day, date and time or confusion over where you are
- inability to distinguish between colours
- mood changes - you may behave in inappropriate ways that are out of character with your personality. This could include emotional responses such as becoming withdrawn, sad, frightened or angry about what is happening to you

## **Diseases that cause dementia**

Dementia is not a normal part of ageing but is caused by physical diseases. The most common forms of dementia are Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, Lewy body dementia and frontotemporal dementia. These diseases affect different parts of the brain, and may result in a range of different symptoms. It is quite common for someone to have more than one type of dementia; this is known as mixed dementia. Older age is the biggest risk factor for dementia, but genetics, medical history and lifestyle factors also play a part. Booklets that explain the diseases that cause dementia, as well as topics such as risk reduction, treatments and genetics, are available free of charge from Alzheimer's Research UK 0300 111 5555 [enquiries@alzheimersresearchuk.org](mailto:enquiries@alzheimersresearchuk.org) [www.alzheimersresearchuk.org](http://www.alzheimersresearchuk.org) Ring Dementia UK on 0800 888 6678 for their leaflet on changes in perception and hallucinations

### **Alzheimer's disease**

- Alzheimer's is one of the most common diseases which can cause dementia
- Scientists think that clumps of an abnormal protein called amyloid build up and stick together to form plaque (similar to dental plaque). This intermittently blocks signals in the brain passing information between cells. Simultaneously another protein called tau becomes damaged causing the disintegration of tunnels called microtubules which allow nutrients to be transported and causing brain cells to die
- The first noticeable sign is usually problems of short-term memory. Other early symptoms may include repetition, misplacing things, confusion, disorientation, problems finding the right words, changes in mood and behaviour
- It tends to develop slowly over several years but can be difficult to distinguish from mild forgetfulness so is not always obvious at the beginning and the speed of change varies from person to person. Medication can slow this down



- As it develops it may affect thinking skills, communication, recognition, day-to-day tasks, sleeping, behaviour, hallucinations, unsteadiness and care needs
- General help is available from the organisations listed at the beginning of this document eg Alzheimer's Society, Alzheimer's Research UK, Dementia UK
- Specialist support for Familial Alzheimer's Disease (FAD) is available from Rare Dementia Support 07341 776316 [contact@raredementiasupport.org](mailto:contact@raredementiasupport.org)  
[www.raredementiasupport.org](http://www.raredementiasupport.org)

### **Late dementia**

- Stands for "Limbic-predominant Age-related TDP-43 Encephalopathy"
- Late dementia appears to affect the "oldest old" - people over 85. About a third of people over 85 have this type of dementia although they may also have other types such as Alzheimer's, vascular or Lewy-Body dementia
- Difficult to diagnose as symptoms are similar to Alzheimer's and likely to have more than one type of dementia. However it tends to cause a more gradual decline in memory. Alzheimer's medication does not work for it because it is caused by a build-up of another abnormal protein called TDP-43. Research to try and find medication is continuing

### **Vascular dementia (or vascular cognitive impairment)**

- About 30-40% of cases are caused by heart disease affecting blood vessels in the brain (subcortical vascular dementia), a sudden stroke (stroke-related dementia or post-stroke dementia) or a series of mini-strokes over a period of time (multi-infarct dementia)
- The blood supply to the brain becomes restricted causing the eventual death of brain cells. The onset can also be caused by surgery if it is already present and there is a drop in blood pressure
- It does not always affect memory at the beginning and can appear as mood swings, inappropriate behaviour or aggression. Symptoms can include thinking skills, personality changes, movement problems and bladder problems
- The speed of progression varies from person to person but there may be sudden changes if there are more strokes
- General help is available from the organisations listed at the beginning of this document eg Alzheimer's Society, Alzheimer's Research UK, Dementia UK

### **Lewy body dementia**

- About 15% of cases involve dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB). People with Parkinson's disease are more likely to develop Lewy body dementia (Parkinson's dementia) but it can also affect others without Parkinson's
- Lewy bodies are tiny deposits of protein in nerve cells which lead to low levels of important chemical messengers and to a loss of connections between nerve cells, often causing problems with movement
- The first noticeable signs are usually disorientation and hallucinations, as well as problems with judging distances, planning, reasoning and problem solving, rather than memory

- Other symptoms include alertness, movement problems, sleep disturbances and stability
  - the Lewy Body Society can give information and support 01942 914000 [info@lewybody.org](mailto:info@lewybody.org) [www.lewybody.org](http://www.lewybody.org)
  - you may also find it helpful to talk to Parkinson's UK; they have a network of local groups in our area and can also answer questions about Parkinson's dementia 0808 800 0303 [hello@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:hello@parkinsons.org.uk) [www.parkinsons.org.uk](http://www.parkinsons.org.uk)

### **Fronto-temporal dementia (FTD) or Frontal-lobe dementia**

- These forms of dementia can affect memory but usually the first noticeable signs are personality and behaviour changes or problems with language skills. Some people may go on to develop problems with movement. For most people the cause is not known. They tend to affect younger people in their 40s to 60s and it can be triggered by a genetic problem. They can develop quite rapidly over a period of about 10 years.
- Information and support is available from Rare Dementia Support 07341 776317 [contact@raredementiasupport.org](mailto:contact@raredementiasupport.org) [www.raredementiasupport.org](http://www.raredementiasupport.org)
- The main types are:
  - Behavioural Variant FTD (bvFTD) including:
    - behaving inappropriately or repeated rudeness (disinhibition)
    - becoming less interested in things (apathy)
    - becoming less interested in people (loss of empathy)
    - becoming inflexible or more obsessive or repetitive in behaviour
    - changes in types of food eaten, such as cravings for sweet things
    - problems with planning or problem-solving
    - difficulty concentrating
  - Primary Progressive Aphasia (PPA) or semantic dementia - problems with language skills. The PPA Support Group has been set up to help people with PPA and their carers. It meets a number of times a year. They can be contacted at [www.dementia.ion.ucl.ac.uk](http://www.dementia.ion.ucl.ac.uk) or [www.ucl.ac.uk/drc/support-groups](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/drc/support-groups)
    - Semantic Dementia (SD) or Semantic Variant PPA including:
      - difficulty finding the right word
      - losing understanding of what words mean
      - talking about things in a vague manner
      - difficulty understanding what other people are saying
      - problems with reading or spelling
    - Progressive Nonfluent Aphasia (PNFA) or Nonfluent Variant PPA including:
      - slow and hesitant speech
      - difficulty finding the right word to say
      - pronouncing words incorrectly
      - missing out words
      - using the wrong tense

- saying the opposite word to the one meant
  - problems with reading or spelling
  - Logopenic Aphasia (LPA) or Logopenic Variant PPA or Language Variant Alzheimer's including:
    - difficulty finding the right word to say
    - repeating sentences
    - pausing in the middle of sentences
- Sometimes people who have Motor Neurone Disease (MND) may go on to develop FTD. Similarly some people with FTD may go on to develop MND. Information and support are available from the Motor Neurone Disease Association [www.mndassociation.org](http://www.mndassociation.org)
- Sometimes people who have FTD may go on to develop Parkinsonism. Information and support is available from Parkinson's UK [www.parkinsons.org.uk](http://www.parkinsons.org.uk) and the PSP Association 0300 011 0122 [helpline@pspassociation.org.uk](mailto:helpline@pspassociation.org.uk) [www.pspassociation.org.uk](http://www.pspassociation.org.uk) There are 2 types which have similar symptoms to Parkinson's Disease:
  - Corticobasal Syndrome (CBS) or Corticobasal Degeneration(CBD) including:
    - clumsiness
    - slowness of movements
    - stiffness
    - tremor
    - jerky movement knocking things over (apraxia)
    - holding the arm in an odd posture
    - inability to do complex things with hands (limb apraxia)
  - Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP) including:
    - difficulty walking
    - balance problems
    - recurrent falls that are often backwards
    - stiffness of the muscles - particularly neck and trunk muscles
    - difficulty moving eyes up and down

### **Early-Onset dementia (or young onset dementia)**

- Affects people under 65
- Can be caused by Alzheimer's, vascular and fronto-temporal dementia
- Symptoms can include memory, confusion. language problems, visual problems, changes in personality and behaviour
- May progress faster or more aggressively but this is far from proven
- Young onset peer support & carers' support group. For people of any age who have young onset dementia and those supporting someone living with it. Free. 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month 2.30-4.30pm. Age UK Day Centre, Hollybush Court, Hollybush Close, Sevenoaks. Contact Amanda Baker 01732 741558 [abaker@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](mailto:abaker@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk)
- Support for anyone under 65 available from Young Dementia UK 01865 794311 [support@youngdementiauk.org](mailto:support@youngdementiauk.org) [www.youngdementiauk.org](http://www.youngdementiauk.org)

- Support also available from Alzheimers Research 0300 111 5111 [info@alzheimersresearchuk.org](mailto:info@alzheimersresearchuk.org) [www.alzheimersresearchuk.org](http://www.alzheimersresearchuk.org) Ask them for their booklet "Caring for someone with dementia"

### **Other diseases which may cause dementia**

- Other diseases may also cause dementia as they develop, including Multiple Sclerosis (MS), HIV/AIDS, Huntington's disease, CJD (Creutzfeld-Jakob disease), Korsakoff's syndrome, Pick's disease, Binswanger's disease etc.

## **Coming to terms with a diagnosis**

Diagnosis can be difficult to come to terms with. It may help to read a book called "Welcome to our World" written by people before and after diagnosis. It is available from the Alzheimer's Society or bookshops. Alzheimer's Society local dementia advisors Christine Warren and Su Kibbey. They can help people who have had a diagnosis of dementia, or are in the process of receiving a diagnosis. They provide support to understand what a diagnosis may mean for you and your family and can provide useful information for you, your family and friends

[westkent@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:westkent@alzheimers.org.uk)

## **The nature of dementia**

Dementia is unpredictable and affects each person in a different way and at different times. It will gradually get worse but how fast depends on the individual person and what type of dementia you have. It is often the case that your family and friends are more concerned about the symptoms than you may be yourself. People react in different ways and a positive attitude is important in living with dementia. In the later stages, you are likely to have problems carrying out everyday tasks and are likely to become increasingly dependent on other people.

## **Caring for someone with dementia**

Age UK produce other information guides on caring for people with dementia and the early stages of dementia. We also produce a guide on making your home more dementia-friendly which is strongly recommended. This explains the importance of lighting and tips for making changes to the bathroom, living room, kitchen, hall and stairs. You can get copies from Age UK 0800 169 6565 [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

See our Care Homes information pack for information on NHS Continuing Healthcare where the NHS pay all the care costs rather than yourself or the local authority. You may be eligible if you have challenging behaviour. If this improves but other things get worse, you may still be eligible if you get anxious or afraid, have hallucinations, need cajoling to eat or drink, are unpredictable, struggle with medication or need to use a hoist. The Alzheimer's Society can advise further.

**Support groups for family carers.** Carers' groups can help partners and families cope with caring. It may be possible to arrange support to look after the person with dementia to enable their carer to attend.

### **Carers' support groups**

- **Age UK Hollybush Court Day Centre**, Hollybush Close, Sevenoaks. Contact Amanda Baker 01732 741558 [abaker@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](mailto:abaker@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk)
  - Daybreak Carers' Support Group. Age UK For family members/carers of our day centre clients to meet and chat with each other and staff. In a separate area to the day centre. 1st Wednesday and 3rd Monday of the month 10-11.30am
  - Young onset peer support & carers' support group. A group exclusively for people of any age who have young onset dementia and those supporting someone living with it. Free. 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month 2.30-4.30pm
- **Tonbridge Methodist Church** on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month 12-3pm 01732 354338
- **East Peckham Carer's Café**. Open to everyone including carers, the people they are caring for and former carers. 2nd & 4th Friday of each month 1.30-3pm at Curran Hall, Pound Rd. Also 1st Tuesday of each month 10.30am-12pm at Parish Council Offices, Pippin Rd. Contact Sandra Edmonds, Community Warden 07969 584183
- **IMAGO** and **INVOLVE** run similar groups (their details are in the "Having a Break" section)
- **Alzheimer's Society** local dementia advisors Christine Warren and Su Kibbey. They can help people who have had a diagnosis of dementia, or are in the process of receiving a diagnosis. They provide support to understand what a diagnosis may mean for you and your family and can provide useful information for you, your family and friends [westkent@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:westkent@alzheimers.org.uk)
- If you want to join a national carers' network contact **TIDE** (Together In Dementia Everyday) 0151 237 2669 [www.tide.uk.net](http://www.tide.uk.net)

**Dementia Outreach at Home.** Age UK's Independent Living Support service offer personalised music, art and reminiscence one-to-one activity sessions. Trained support workers can take people out or visit people at home to work with them on projects to provide stimulation and engagement. The activity sessions are built around their life and hobbies to try and rekindle their interest. Sessions are a minimum of 2 hours at £22.50 per hour. Age UK 01732 454108

**Talking to someone online.** If you have questions about dementia, want to share experiences or get information and practical tips on living with dementia you can join an online community [www.alzheimers.org.uk/talkingpoint](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/talkingpoint)

**Courses and workshops for families.** If you are online, there are two free courses available to help you feel supported and connected to others in a similar situation. If you aren't online, family or friends may be able to help you access them:

- [www.futurelearn.com/courses/dementia-care](http://www.futurelearn.com/courses/dementia-care)
- [www.futurelearn.com/courses/comfort-care](http://www.futurelearn.com/courses/comfort-care)

Some private care agencies eg Home Instead (listed in the "Having a Break" section) can organise workshops for families. You can learn about managing behaviour associated with dementia, encouraging you to share memories and engage in activities. Some workshops may be free

## One-to-one support for family carers

- **Crossroads Care Kent.** 170 Tonbridge Rd, Watlingbury ME18 5NS 0345 095 6701, 01622 817114 [enquiries@crossroadskent.org](mailto:enquiries@crossroadskent.org) [www.carerskm.org](http://www.carerskm.org)
- **Alzheimer's Society** local dementia advisors Christine Warren and Su Kibbey. They can help people who have had a diagnosis of dementia, or are in the process of receiving a diagnosis. They provide support to understand what a diagnosis may mean for you and your family and can provide useful information for you, your family and friends [westkent@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:westkent@alzheimers.org.uk)
- You can also get advice, information and support from **Carers UK Helpline** 0808 808 7777 (Mon-Tue 10am-4pm) [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org) [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org) and the Carers Trust [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)

**Dementia UK Admiral Nurses.** The Admiral Nurses at Dementia UK can give you practical and emotional support from before diagnosis through to end-of-life. They work with some NHS Memory Clinics. Other organisations they work with include the Good Care Group (a private care agency) and Lavender Fields (a local care home). Sometimes this support is available in your home; where that is not possible then you can ring their helpline for support 0800 888 6678 [direct@dementiauk.org](mailto:direct@dementiauk.org) [helpline@dementiauk.org](mailto:helpline@dementiauk.org) [www.dementiauk.org](http://www.dementiauk.org)

**Royal British Legion Admiral Nurses.** The Royal British Legion also have an Admiral Nurse Service to support family carers with practical support and advice. They offer support and run care homes not only for members of the Navy, Army and Air Force but also for reservists, veterans and their families 0808 802 8080 [www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk) [www.rbl.org.uk](http://www.rbl.org.uk)

**Dementia Nurse Specialists.** They can help with:

- Advice on coping mechanisms when caring for someone
- Managing symptoms
- Completing Power of Attorney forms, life histories, forms in case you go missing, advanced care planning documents, advance decisions to refuse treatment, end-of-life care

Contact Heart of Kent Hospice dementia service, Preston Hall, Aylesford ME20 7PU 01622 792200 [enquiries@hokh.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@hokh.co.uk)

**Seniors Helping Seniors.** Can help with food preparation/cooking, shopping, light housework/laundry, gardening, transport to social activities and medical appointments, pet care, companionship etc. £24.60 per hour. Do not provide personal care (help with washing, dressing, medication etc) 01732 495665 [enquiries@seniorshelpingseniors.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@seniorshelpingseniors.co.uk) [www.seniorshelpingseniors.co.uk](http://www.seniorshelpingseniors.co.uk)

**Keys to Care.** This is available as a set of pocket cards on a keyring with accompanying notes or an app that a carer can use on a mobile or tablet. They summarise the things for you to think about, ask and do if the person with dementia is being cared for at home including ideas which can be used or adapted. Available from the Relatives & Residents Association 020 7359 8148 [info@relres.org](mailto:info@relres.org) [www.relres.org](http://www.relres.org)

**iPads.** If the person with dementia can use computers, they can use an iPad to remember how to do basic things if they forget. For example, how to make a cup of

tea/coffee, how to make a ham sandwich/cheese on toast, how to flush the toilet, how to lock the door, how to use the tumble drier etc. The way it works is you put "flash cards" on the wall which say things like "make a cup of tea" and have a QR code. They scan the QR code with their iPad and it plays a short video showing them how to do it.

**Coping with dementia.** There are many coping strategies which carers may develop to help a person with dementia. Here are some ideas:

- Notes and lists to act as reminders. Writing things down can help with remembering things eg writing down cooking instructions or names of grandchildren. It is also sometimes possible to retrain the brain to remember things by doing this.
- Decisions are easier if they are shown a choice. For example, if you are asking them to choose which soup they would like, it may help if they are shown the cans of soup rather than simply being asked.
- Research in Japan has found that doing reading, writing and arithmetic exercises makes a difference to coping on an everyday basis.
- Dementia can affect vision so colour contrast is important. For example, it may be easier to them to see food if you use coloured crockery.
- If they find lights too bright or scary then it may help them to wear dark glasses in the evening.
- If they get lost in your own home and are wandering then it may help if you try to find out where they are trying to go and show them the way. For example, if they want to go upstairs, it may help if you show them where the stairs are if they can't find them.
- If they are tempted to go out at night then it may help to put curtains over the front door so it is less obvious. They are likely to try every door so if there are other doors leading outside then these need to be covered at night as well. You may also benefit from an alarm that sounds if they try to go out (see the Peace of Mind section for details).
- If they are on their own during the day they can leave dirty crockery in the sink to wash up at the end of the day so that you can see if they have eaten or drunk and what they have had during the day.
- If they have difficulty cutting food or using cutlery they may find it easier to eat ready-chopped food. Chinese food can be a good example.
- If they can no longer recognise people, introduce yourself when you see them
- Remember that the apparent loss of emotion can be a coping mechanism.
- Ring Dementia UK on 0800 888 6678 for their leaflet on things to try when someone stops recognising you

**Tips for better communication.** There is an excellent leaflet available from Dementia UK. It covers understanding the challenges a person with dementia may face with communication, good communication skills, ways in which they may communicate, possible reasons for this and how you can help 0800 888 6678 [helpline@dementiauk.org](mailto:helpline@dementiauk.org) [www.dementiauk.org](http://www.dementiauk.org) There are some simple things you can do to communicate more effectively in person and on the phone:

- Speak clearly, calmly and at a slightly slower pace if the person is having difficulty understanding
- Use short, simple sentences

- Be patient and give the person time to respond
- Try to avoid asking too many questions, or complicated questions, phrasing them in a way which allows a “yes” or “no” answer
- Stand or sit where the person can see and hear you as clearly as possible, and try to be at eye level

**SPECAL - the Contented Dementia approach.** Another coping strategy if you are having difficulties understanding what dementia is and how to look after someone is SPECAL (Specialised Early Care for Alzheimer’s and other dementias). This is a controversial approach which carers may wish to consider. It involves accepting the person’s perceived reality rather than trying to correct it. There are 3 golden rules:

- Don’t ask questions that will only cause distress when the person cannot find the answer
- Listen to the person with dementia and offer them only information that will make them feel better
- Do not contradict

There is considerable evidence that this approach of “go with the flow” makes people happier but it may not be appropriate for everyone and it requires a lot of effort on the part of family and carers. See the “Helpful Books” section for more details.

### Medication

- Age UK’s Independent Living Support service may be able to pick up prescriptions, make appointments and take you to them. We may also be able to remind, prompt or encourage you to take medication. £19.50 per hour. 01732 454108
- When there are lots of tablets to take, it can be easy to lose track of when they were last taken. Your local chemist (for example, Boots) may be able to help. Ask your chemist what services they offer. For example:
  - giving you a Dosset Box so your tablets are organised in day and time slots
  - delivering medication at the same time each week/month
  - getting prescriptions straight from GPs
  - reminders about medication reviews with GPs

More information is available at [www.boots.com/en/Medisure-Taking-medicines-correctly\\_1282213](http://www.boots.com/en/Medisure-Taking-medicines-correctly_1282213)

- Medication reminders can be combined with a basic personal alarm. They send you a visual and audible alert when medication needs to be taken. If time slots are missed, an alert is sent to the monitoring centre who will contact you. These are available from Welbeing 01323 644422 [www.welbeing.org.uk](http://www.welbeing.org.uk)
- There are many companies which specialise in products for memory loss. One example is Unforgettable 020 3322 9070/9388 [info@unforgettable.org](mailto:info@unforgettable.org) [www.unforgettable.org](http://www.unforgettable.org) Here are a couple of things that might help:
  - Automated medication dispensers open and dispense medication at particular times but you need to remember to take it immediately and be able to use the equipment.
  - Memrabel is a clock and calendar which can be programmed with family photos and voices to give visual and verbal reminders to take medication.
- See also our Care Agencies information pack for care agencies or companions who can supervise or physically help you to take medication



**Other things that might help.** There are lots of gadgets that might help:

- dementia-friendly signs around the home with pictograms pointing the way to rooms
- visual communication boards such as pain assessment charts, menu boards, weekly activity & reminder boards
- calendar clocks, personal orientation boards and clocks which show whether it is day or night
- clocks and calendars which can be programmed with family photos and voices to give visual and verbal reminders to have a drink, use the toilet, remember a carer is due soon etc.
- other clocks, time reminders, signs and labels to help with wandering etc.
- reminiscence pictures, memory boxes, nostalgic radiograms
- things to help find and use the toilet, understand the front door, see and manipulate food in an easier way
- activities (jigsaws, entertainment, arts & crafts, reminiscing & conversation, fun & games, sensory skills etc)
- things to help with wellbeing (exercise, soothing & relaxing, pet & doll therapy etc)
- things to help with daily living (getting dressed, eating & drinking, hygiene, bathroom, continence protection, bedding, mobility etc)
- technology that may help (communication, safety, peace of mind etc)

The Alzheimer's Society online shop has a variety of products specifically for people with dementia <https://shop.alzheimers.org.uk/>

**Getting hold of things that might help.** You may be able to get things free or at low cost. To do this, you need an equipment assessment. You can phone Social Services on 03000 416161 and ask for Occupational Therapists but there may be a waiting list. In Sevenoaks District it may be quicker to ring Age UK and ask for Your Home co-ordinator equipment assessments. Contact James Keast 07864 959141 [jameskeast@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](mailto:jameskeast@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk) If you can afford it or you don't want to wait then you can buy things that help. You can get catalogues from various companies:

- Find Memory Care 0113 230 2046 [sales@findmemorycare.co.uk](mailto:sales@findmemorycare.co.uk)  
[www.findmemorycare.co.uk](http://www.findmemorycare.co.uk)
- Unforgettable 020 3322 9070/9388 [info@unforgettable.org](mailto:info@unforgettable.org)  
[www.unforgettable.org](http://www.unforgettable.org)
- Other websites worth checking are [www.athome.uk.com](http://www.athome.uk.com) and [www.myageingparent.com](http://www.myageingparent.com)

**Trying out things that might help.** You can also test out electronic aids (such as memory prompters or big button phones) that you think might help by borrowing them for 2 weeks from the Disability Living Foundation library 0300 999 0004 [helpline@dlf.org.uk](mailto:helpline@dlf.org.uk) [www.dlf.org.uk](http://www.dlf.org.uk)

## **Clothing**

Many companies design clothing to help retain their dignity, identity and individuality.

- There are clothes which make it easier to get dressed, for example, open-back trousers, shirts, blouses, dresses, skirts and nighties. Try Adaptawear 0800 051 1931 [www.adaptawear.com](http://www.adaptawear.com)
- Attractive but functional garments can help to take stress out of daily tasks such as mealtimes and showering. Dining draprons are absorbent clothing protectors that are based on aprons and are much more dignified than bibs. Shower and drying draprons can be left on during showering or bathing; they retain the dignity and privacy of the person being helped to shower or bathe so they never have to be naked in front of someone else. These are produced by Limon Attire Ltd [barbara.lewis@limonattire.com](mailto:barbara.lewis@limonattire.com) [www.limonattire.com](http://www.limonattire.com)

**Washing and looking after their appearance.** You can buy no rinse shampoo and body wash, skin care, disposable gloves and personal care items from many suppliers including Amazon and the Complete Care Shop 0845 519 4734 [www.completecareshop.co.uk](http://www.completecareshop.co.uk)

**Call-to-mind.** This is a specially designed board game which stimulates people to talk about themselves, retrieve specific memories and communicate with their friends and family. Many board games are too complicated, too childish or quickly become too difficult. This one has been carefully thought out by a team of dementia specialists, occupational therapists and games designers 07957 199305 [info@call-to-mind.com](mailto:info@call-to-mind.com) [www.call-to-mind.com](http://www.call-to-mind.com)

**Bounce Alzheimer's Therapy (BAT) drug-free table tennis.** This is a specially designed table tennis therapy table which improves hand-eye coordination, stimulates the brain, extends long-term memory, delays cognitive decline and enhances motor skills 020 3019 2121 [info@batfoundation.com](mailto:info@batfoundation.com) [www.batfoundation.com](http://www.batfoundation.com)

**Magic table games.** If they have moderate to severe dementia, the Active Cues Tovertafel may help. It projects games onto a table. Light animations stimulate physical and social activity by reacting to their hand and arm movements. The animations are familiar things (such as sweeping leaves, throwing balls, chasing butterflies etc) There are frequent reminders to keep their attention and it can provide invaluable interaction with families and carers as well [info@activecues.com](mailto:info@activecues.com) [www.activecues.com](http://www.activecues.com)

**Assistive technology.** AT Dementia is a charity that provides information and advice about assistive technology for people with dementia. This includes devices like calendar clocks, automatic lighting and fall sensors [www.atdementia.org.uk](http://www.atdementia.org.uk)

**Easylink.** There are many companies which use assistive technology to aid independent living such as recordable message alarm clocks, big time display clocks, talking pill box reminder timers, portable memory aids, remote-controlled object locators, motion-activated reminders, personal trackers with 2-way speech, memory aids, safe doorbells, bed & chair leaving alarms etc. One example is Easylink, 3 Melbourne House, Corby Gate Business Park, Priors Haw Rd, Corby NN17 5JG 01536 264869 [sales@easylinkuk.co.uk](mailto:sales@easylinkuk.co.uk) [www.easylinkuk.co.uk](http://www.easylinkuk.co.uk)

**Dementia Pal.** Dementia Pal is a company that produces a computerised assessment tool which allows you to assess the level of ability of someone with dementia. It then offers you daily activities and tips to help you care for them  
[www.dementia-pal.com](http://www.dementia-pal.com)

## Having a break (respite care)

**Crossroads Care Kent.** 170 Tonbridge Rd, Watlington ME18 5NS 0345 095 6701, 01622 817114 [enquiries@crossroadskent.org](mailto:enquiries@crossroadskent.org) [www.carerskm.org](http://www.carerskm.org)

- Can give you a regular break while trained carers look after the person you care for
- You can use this time to rest, sleep, meet friends, go shopping, collect prescriptions, attend classes or social activities, go to your own health appointments etc
- One visit a week for 2 ½ to 4 hours (either on the same day or can be split between different days)
- The same person at the same time to ensure continuity of care
- The carers can do personal care eg bathing, dressing/undressing, management of incontinence, preparation of meals and assistance with eating
- They can also take out the person being cared for including to appointments or social activities while you have your home to yourself for a few hours
- They can be flexible and look after someone at night
- You can refer yourself
- Waiting list (currently a few months) so you should register with them as soon as possible
- One visit a week is free. However you may be able to purchase additional visits and get help with paying for them from Social Services
- Crossroads is a charity which is part of the Carers' Trust
- Reassessed every 6 months

**Shared Lives Dementia Project.** Social Services train other families to share their own homes to provide long-term but temporary care placements or short breaks for people with dementia. You can find out more from Shared Lives 03000 414141  
[www.kent.gov.uk/sharedlives](http://www.kent.gov.uk/sharedlives)

**Respite care breaks in care homes.** If you are becoming more short-tempered helping someone with dementia then it may be worth considering respite stays just for the day in a care home. Being away from family stress gives both you and the person you look after a break for the day. This "me" time can be very important for both you and them. It may also mean that they can be involved in choosing a care home and get to know it in case they have to move into it on a more permanent basis in the future. It is often hard for family carers to accept someone with dementia moving into a care home (even if this is their preference) so this may help both of you become more used to the idea.

**Private care agencies.** Many private care agencies can also provide respite care. Private carers can come to your home to give you a break. You can get a list of local care agencies from Age UK 01732 454108  
[www.ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](http://www.ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk) When ringing round or looking at their websites it is a good idea to find out if they have specialist staff trained to help

people with dementia such as Admiral Nurses. Here are a few examples of agencies you could try who have said that they specialise in dementia, but there are many other private care agencies who may be able to help:

- All About Home Care 01732 447055 [www.allabouthomecare.co.uk](http://www.allabouthomecare.co.uk)
- Angels Homecare Kent Ltd 01622 715500 [www.angelshomecarekent.co.uk](http://www.angelshomecarekent.co.uk)
- Bespoke Care Company Ltd 01892 518400  
[www.bespokecarecompany.co.uk](http://www.bespokecarecompany.co.uk)
- Birchwood Care Services 01892 863710 [www.birchwoodhouse.org.uk](http://www.birchwoodhouse.org.uk)
- Bluebird Care Sevenoaks 01732 469432 [www.bluebirdcare.co.uk](http://www.bluebirdcare.co.uk)
- Good Care Group (live-in care) 01732 441098 [www.thegoodcaregroup.com](http://www.thegoodcaregroup.com)
- Hale Place Care Solutions 01622 871081 [www.haleplace.co.uk](http://www.haleplace.co.uk)
- Home Instead Senior Care (day care by the hour and respite care) 01732 759854, 01892 731264 [www.homeinstead.co.uk](http://www.homeinstead.co.uk)
- TerraBlu HomeCare Ltd 01892 529429 [www.terrablu.co.uk](http://www.terrablu.co.uk)

## Holidays

- **Dementia Adventure.** Supported holidays and short breaks for people living with dementia and their carers. They offer an opportunity to get outdoors, connect with nature and retain a sense of adventure as an alternative to traditional respite care. Holidays are subsidised by 25%, and they may be able to offer further financial assistance to make your holiday possible. They also provide free training for family and friends supporting somebody with dementia 01245 237548 [www.dementiaadventure.co.uk](http://www.dementiaadventure.co.uk)
- **Mind for You.** This is a specialist company that provides supported holidays in the UK for people living with dementia and their relatives or friends to enjoy together, in small groups of up to 10 people. Prices start from about £955 per person for a 5-day break 01509 351008 [info@mindforyou.co.uk](mailto:info@mindforyou.co.uk)  
[www.mindforyou.co.uk](http://www.mindforyou.co.uk)
- **Revitalise.** Charity providing short breaks and holidays. People with early dementia can be cared for while you have a break; people with advanced dementia will need to be accompanied by their carer 0303 303 0145  
[www.revitalise.org.uk](http://www.revitalise.org.uk)
- **The Mede.** Company which has 2 bungalows offering short breaks, holidays, respite care and day care for people with dementia and their carers 07718 976072 [sallie@themedede.org](mailto:sallie@themedede.org) [www.themedede.org](http://www.themedede.org)

## Helpful books, music and cards

**What it's like to live with dementia.** You may find these 3 booklets helpful. They are written by someone with dementia and provide an insight into living with dementia after diagnosis. They are called "Hello, it's me", "Hello, it's still me" and "Hello and goodbye, Brian" by June & Brian Hennell. You can get them from the Association for Dementia Studies, University of Worcester 01905 542531  
[dementia@worc.ac.uk](mailto:dementia@worc.ac.uk) [www.worcester.ac.uk/discover/dementia-books.html](http://www.worcester.ac.uk/discover/dementia-books.html)

**Looking after people with dementia.** There are many books on looking after people with dementia. One example is "10 Helpful Hints for Carers: Practical Solutions for Carers Living with People with Dementia". This is a book written by June Andrews and Allan House. It is published by the Dementia Services

Development Centre at the University of Stirling. You can order it from libraries or bookshops.

**Understanding memory loss.** Sunrise, a care home provider produce a guide to memory loss. This guide has lots of useful information for everyone, regardless of whether the person moves to a care home. It is called the “Memory Care Guide – Understanding the Memory Loss Journey” and you can download a free copy from Sunrise’s website at [www.sunrise-care.co.uk/careguide](http://www.sunrise-care.co.uk/careguide) It includes:

- What to expect as a carer – assistance, inhibitions etc
- Early signs of dementia
- How to be an effective carer
- Building bridges with people with dementia – respect, reminiscence, empathy
- Tips for good communication
- Creating meaning and purpose in their lives, especially at mealtimes
- How music can help
- Looking after your own health as a carer – support groups, respite breaks etc
- Overcoming challenges – sense of time, anger, how to say hello, what to do if they don’t recognise you
- Moving into a care home – how to handle this

**Leaflets on things to try when someone stops recognising you.** Also leaflets on music therapy, grief, bereavement and loss. Dementia UK 0800 888 6678

**Puzzles and games.** These can help keep the mind active and engaged. The Alzheimer’s Society online shop has a variety of products specifically for people with dementia <https://shop.alzheimers.org.uk>

**Library books and services.** Kent Libraries 01732 585300  
[www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/libraries](http://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/libraries)

- **“Pictures to Share”** is a range of books to help trigger memories and make it easier to hold conversations, available at Sevenoaks and Edenbridge libraries.
- **Reminiscence.** Larger local libraries and the Eden Valley Museum also have collections of historical objects, audio recordings, books, photos and posters.
- **Boosting your mood.** Libraries have a selection of books designed to boost a person’s mood including novels, poetry and non-fiction [www.reading-well.org.uk](http://www.reading-well.org.uk)
- **Home Library Service** can bring books to you.

**Explaining dementia to children.** There are several books for children which explain dementia. One example is “Grandma” written by Jessica Shepherd and published by Child’s Play. There is also a good website for children and young people at [www.dementiaexplained.org](http://www.dementiaexplained.org)

**Contented Dementia.** You can find out more about the SPECAL approach by reading a book called “Contented Dementia” by Oliver James. This is available from a charity called the Contented Dementia Trust, The Old Hospital, Sheep Street,

Burford OX18 4LS [info@contenteddementiastrust.org](mailto:info@contenteddementiastrust.org)  
[www.contenteddementiastrust.org](http://www.contenteddementiastrust.org)

**Other books on dementia.** There are many other books on the experience of dementia; person-centred approaches; dementia care homes; explaining dementia to children, families and friends; activities and creative ideas; end-of-life care and bereavement; spiritual care and keeping safe. One specialist producing a catalogue is Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 73 Collier St, London N1 9BE 020 7833 2307  
[hello@jkp.com](mailto:hello@jkp.com) [www.jkp.com](http://www.jkp.com)

**LifeStory.** This is a document you can create about someone's life with photos and pictures. It can be used to help the person who has dementia, family members, carers and nurses. You can download a flexible template from  
[www.dementiauk.org/storytemplate](http://www.dementiauk.org/storytemplate)

**To Know Me.** This is a company set up by someone whose mother has dementia. It can help you create a personalised book about someone that will help carers understand them better. You can either download or buy a printed blank book and then add your own photos and text to the pages 01892 710117 [www.toknowme.org](http://www.toknowme.org)

**Book of You.** This is a computer app where you can make and view a digital life story book. This is a collection of photos, words and other things that reflect important aspects of their life. It is a way to share happy memories with family, friends and carers. Available from Dementia Citizens [www.dementiacitizens.org](http://www.dementiacitizens.org)

**My Brain Book.** This is a computer programme where you can record important memories and make plans for future care. You can add photos, recording when they were taken and labelling who's in them to help identify people, add music and create a list of contacts [www.mybrainbook.com](http://www.mybrainbook.com)

**Music websites:** [www.musicmirrors.co.uk](http://www.musicmirrors.co.uk) [www.livemusicnow.org.uk](http://www.livemusicnow.org.uk)

**BBC Music Memories.** If the person enjoys music, the website BBC Music Memories can help people with dementia reconnect with their most powerful memories [www.musicmemories.bbcrewind.co.uk](http://www.musicmemories.bbcrewind.co.uk)

**Music for Dementia.** They provide a free radio station offering a selection of easy-listening music from the 1930s to 70s. You can access it at <https://m4dradio.com>

**Musical Memories sing-a-long choir.** 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thu of each month 10.30am-12pm. Methodist Church, Higham Lane, Tonbridge. Contact Richard Hill 07914 812068

**Oast Theatre.** Tonbridge Rd, Hildenborough. Music, movement and singing sessions. Contact Jason Lower 01892 500673 [jason@trinitytheatre.net](mailto:jason@trinitytheatre.net)

**Playlist for Life.** This is a computer app where a person with dementia can listen to music that means something to them. Everyone has a song that takes them back to another time and place or cheers them up, and listening to this music can have powerful benefits for people who are living with dementia. Available from Dementia Citizens [www.dementiacitizens.org](http://www.dementiacitizens.org) [www.playlistforlife.org.uk](http://www.playlistforlife.org.uk)

**Music Memory Box.** This is a simple kit that you fill together with meaningful objects, music and photographs. By placing a sensor on any object, like a shell for example, you can link a song to play when you put it in the centre of the box.  
[huw@studiomeineck.com](mailto:huw@studiomeineck.com) [www.musicmemorybox.com](http://www.musicmemorybox.com)

**Smell & Connect.** This is a pack of cards which can stimulate conversation, stir memories and engage their feelings to relive parenthood, gardening and favourite foods by sharing the scent and images of happy occasions, hobbies and everyday activities. They feature resealable scented stickers and corresponding story cards. Smells currently available include fresh-cut grass, chocolate oranges, baby powder, fresh laundry, tomato plants and Victoria sponge. About £25  
[www.smellandconnect.co.uk](http://www.smellandconnect.co.uk)

**Bright Boxes.** Bright Shadow produce Bright Boxes which are creative activity kits you can do together to have fun and bring back memories. Each kit has ideas and instructions for craft activities, an exercise and dance DVD and other resources. There are 2 themes available. Arts & Culture includes activities involving making a cakestand, playing dominoes, doing a hand jive, learning a ballet dancer's stretch, creative writing and making salt dough sculptures. Great Outdoors includes activities involving morris dancing, bird feeders, crosswords, indoor boules, making granola, writing poems and playing music. They cost £20. You can find out more by contacting Bright Shadow, Beach House, Beach St, Herne Bay CT6 5PT 0300 102 8855 [info@brightshadow.org.uk](mailto:info@brightshadow.org.uk) [www.brightboxes.co.uk](http://www.brightboxes.co.uk)

## Memory cafes and other social activities

**Memory cafes.** These are free drop-in sessions for people with memory issues as well as their families, friends and carers. People usually need to be accompanied by their carers if they need help. They provide companionship and support over a cup of tea or coffee for carers and the people they are looking after in a safe and comfortable environment. It is a good way to meet other people in similar situations and support each other. Help is available with information and other services.

- **Aylesford dementia cafés**
  - **Heart of Kent Hospice.** Magnolia Place, Preston Hall, Aylesford ME 20 7PU. 1st Sat of the month 10.30am-12.30pm. Contact Tracy Jackson 01622 792200 [enquiries@hokh.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@hokh.co.uk) [www.hokh.org](http://www.hokh.org)
  - **St Peter & St Paul's Church.** Brassey Centre hall, Station Rd, Aylesford ME20 7QR. 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month 2.30-4pm. Contact Jane Roberts 07462 682980 [admin@aylesford-church.org.uk](mailto:admin@aylesford-church.org.uk) [www.aylesford-church.org.uk](http://www.aylesford-church.org.uk)
- **Ditton Brain Training dementia group.** Community Centre. Mon-Fri 9am-3pm
- **East Malling memory café.** East Malling Centre, Chapmans Way. 2<sup>nd</sup> Thu of the month 2-4pm. Contact Liz Simpson 07463 222733
- **Edenbridge Forget-me-Not café.** Last Fri of each month 10.30am-12pm. Eden Centre. For anyone regardless of whether they have memory issues. 07946 534476, 07580 601182 [forgetmenot.sadfc@gmail.com](mailto:forgetmenot.sadfc@gmail.com) [www.forgetmenotcafe.org.uk](http://www.forgetmenotcafe.org.uk)

- **Eynsford & Farningham dementia café.** 2<sup>nd</sup> Fri of every month. Village hall, Eynsford. 10am-12pm. Contact Ferne Haxby 07980 820216  
[ferne.haxby@yahoo.com](mailto:ferne.haxby@yahoo.com)
- **Hildenborough Forget-me-Not café.** St John's Church Centre, Foxbush, Hildenborough TN11 9HT. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month 11am-12.30pm. For anyone regardless of whether they have memory issues 07946 534476, 07580 601182 [forgetmenot.sadfc@gmail.com](mailto:forgetmenot.sadfc@gmail.com) [www.forgetmenotcafe.org.uk](http://www.forgetmenotcafe.org.uk)
- **New Ash Green memory cafe.** 2<sup>nd</sup> Tue of month 10am-12pm. Village hall
- **Offham Time to Talk café.** Spadework Garden Centre. 1<sup>st</sup> Mon of the month 2.30-4.30pm. Contact Mick Smithson 01732 870002
- **Oxford memory cafés.**
  - Forget-me-Not café. For anyone regardless of whether they have memory issues. 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday each month 11am-12.30pm Memorial Hall, High St 07946 534476, 07580 601182  
[forgetmenot.sadfc@gmail.com](mailto:forgetmenot.sadfc@gmail.com) [www.forgetmenotcafe.org.uk](http://www.forgetmenotcafe.org.uk)
  - Vitality Home Health may run a memory café at The Crown, Otford Pond. 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month 10am-12pm. Contact Debbie 01732 755582, 07522 962952 [debbie@vitalityhomehealth.co.uk](mailto:debbie@vitalityhomehealth.co.uk)
  - There may also be a club for people with dementia in Otford called Down Memory Lane. Activities include reminiscence and singing, art activities and refreshments. To find out if there are any places, phone 01732 743056 (information from Sevenoaks District Council).
- **Sevenoaks**
  - **Age UK Hollybush Court dementia cafe.** Hollybush Court, Hollybush Close, Sevenoaks. For people living with memory loss and their partners or carers. Come along and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, cake and biscuits, have a chat and maybe make new friends. Free. 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday every month 2.30-4.30pm. Contact Amanda Baker 01732 741558 [abaker@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](mailto:abaker@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk)
  - **Forget-me-Not cafés.** For anyone regardless of whether they have memory issues 07946 534476, 07580 601182  
[forgetmenot.sadfc@gmail.com](mailto:forgetmenot.sadfc@gmail.com) [www.forgetmenotcafe.org.uk](http://www.forgetmenotcafe.org.uk)
    - The Hayloft, Knole House, Sevenoaks TN13 1HU. 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of every month 10.30am-12pm.
    - Bat & Ball Station, Bat & Ball Rd, Sevenoaks TN14 5AP. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month 10am-12pm.
- **Snodland dementia café.** Christchurch Hall. 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Mon of the month 10am-12pm
- **Tonbridge**
  - **Age UK dementia café.** For people living with memory loss and their partners or carers. Come along and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, cake and biscuits, have a chat and maybe make new friends. Free. 1<sup>st</sup> Tue of the month 2-4pm. Town Lock, Lockside, Tonbridge TN9 1EA. Contact Faydra Mitchell 07846 238925  
[fmitchell@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](mailto:fmitchell@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk)



- **Bowls dementia café.** For people with memory loss interested in bowls. Angel Indoor Bowls Club, Avenue Du Puy. 4<sup>th</sup> Thu of the month 2.30-4.30pm. Contact Chris Thorogood [bowlscfe21@gmail.com](mailto:bowlscfe21@gmail.com)
- **Young onset dementia café.** A group exclusively for people of any age who have young onset dementia. Free. 1st Wed of the month 2-4pm. Town Lock, Lockside, Tonbridge TN9 1EA. Contact Faydra Mitchell 07846 238925 [fmitchell@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](mailto:fmitchell@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk)
- **Weald Café on the Green.** For anyone regardless of whether they have memory issues. Tue 10am-12pm. Weald Memorial Hall. Contact Nikki Goozee 07939 053420 [wellness@stgeorgesweald.co.uk](mailto:wellness@stgeorgesweald.co.uk)
- **West Kingsdown memory café** [info@alz-dem.org](mailto:info@alz-dem.org)
- **Westerham Forget-me-Not café.** Congregational Church Hall, Fullers Hill, Westerham TN16 1AB. 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every month 11am-12.30pm. For anyone regardless of whether they have memory issues 07946 534476, 07580 601182 [forgetmenot.sadfc@gmail.com](mailto:forgetmenot.sadfc@gmail.com) [www.forgetmenotcafe.org.uk](http://www.forgetmenotcafe.org.uk)

**COGS clubs (Cognitive Stimulation Groups).** Cognitive Stimulation Groups are aimed at people with mild to moderate memory loss who want cognitive stimulation. They aim to encourage members to participate in purposeful activity in order to develop or maintain active minds.

- **Age UK COGS clubs.** £25
  - Hollybush Day Centre. Hollybush Court, Hollybush Close, Sevenoaks. Every Tuesday 10am-2pm. Contact Amanda Baker 01732 741558 [abaker@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](mailto:abaker@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk)
  - Town Lock Day Centre, Lockside, Tonbridge TN9 1EA. Every Monday 10am-3pm. Contact Faydra Mitchell 07846 238925 [fmitchell@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](mailto:fmitchell@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk)
- **Crossroads Care COGS Club.** Tonbridge. Thursdays 10am-3pm. £25 including lunch. 01622 817114, 0345 095 6701 [enquiries@crossroadskent.org](mailto:enquiries@crossroadskent.org) [www.carerskm.org](http://www.carerskm.org)
- **Darent House,** Hospital Rd, Sevenoaks TN13 3PG. Once or twice a week for about 14 weeks. They also run a Living Well with Dementia Group 01732 228242 [www.kmpt.nhs.uk](http://www.kmpt.nhs.uk)

### Day care

- **Age UK.** Dementia Day Care. Dementia-trained staff offer clients a range of stimulating activities to aid memory as well as health and wellbeing support. £42 including refreshments throughout the day. Contact Amanda Baker 01732 741558 [abaker@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](mailto:abaker@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk) or Sally Robinson 01732 454108 [sallyrobinson@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](mailto:sallyrobinson@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk)
  - Hollybush Day Centre, Hollybush Court, Hollybush Close, Sevenoaks. Hot lunch. Transport may be available. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 10am till 3pm
  - Town Lock Day Centre, Tonbridge. Sandwich lunch. Every Friday 10am till 3pm
- **Alzheimer's & Dementia Support Services.** Gravesend. Open Monday to Saturday. £35 per day. Transport £9. 01474 533990

- **Heart of Kent Hospice** Making Memories day service, Preston Hall, Aylesford ME20 7PU. For both people with dementia and their carers 01622 792200 [enquiries@hokh.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@hokh.co.uk)
- See also our Social Activities information pack for general day care which sometimes may be suitable for people with very mild or early dementia
- See also our Care Homes information pack for care homes which may also take people for day care

**Dementia Outreach at Home.** Age UK's Independent Living Support service offer personalised music, art and reminiscence one-to-one activity sessions. Trained support workers can take people out or visit their home to work with them on projects to provide stimulation and engagement. The activity sessions are built around their life and hobbies to try and rekindle their interest. Sessions are a minimum of 2 hours at £22.50 per hour. Covers Edenbridge, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, West Malling and Westerham. Age UK 01732 454108

**Dementia & Me social groups.** Town Lock, Lockside, Tonbridge TN9 1EA. Contact Faydra Mitchell 07846 238925 [fmitchell@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](mailto:fmitchell@ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk)

- **Craft club.** For people with memory loss interested in knitting, sewing, painting etc. Free. 2nd Tue of the month 2-4pm.
- **Gardening club.** For people with memory loss interested in gardening. Free. 4th Tue of the month 10am-12pm.
- **LGBTQIA+ club.** For people with memory loss identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex or asexual. Free. 2nd Wed of the month 2-4pm.
- **Peer group.** Support group for people with memory loss. Free. 3rd Tue of the month 2-4pm.

**Singing groups.** Music can be very therapeutic for people with dementia. It is particularly good if they have stopped speaking much.

- **"Forget-me-Notes"** is a "Sing-a-long with a cuppa" group where you can join in singing old favourites. It is open to anyone who enjoys a good sing-a-long including people with dementia and their carers. 3rd Thursday afternoon each month at Beatrice Wilson Flats Common Room, Rockdale Rd, Sevenoaks 07946 534476, 07580 601182 [forgetmenot.sadfc@gmail.com](mailto:forgetmenot.sadfc@gmail.com)  
[www.forgetmenotcafe.org.uk](http://www.forgetmenotcafe.org.uk)
- **Musical Memories** sing-along choir for older people with or without memory issues. Partners and carers welcome. 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month 10.30am-12pm. Barnes Lodge care home, Tudeley Lane, Tonbridge 01732 369171
- **Senior Sing.** £5 including tea/coffee. Contact Jason Lower 07587 537308, 01892 500673 [jason@trinitytheatre.net](mailto:jason@trinitytheatre.net) [encore@trinitytheatre.net](mailto:encore@trinitytheatre.net)  
[www.trinitytheatre.net](http://www.trinitytheatre.net)
  - Oast Theatre, Tonbridge Rd, Hildenborough. Wednesdays 3.30-4.30pm
  - Trinity Arts Theatre, Church Rd, Tunbridge Wells. Wednesdays 10.30am-12pm

**Dementia-friendly cinema screenings.** Four local care homes organise free dementia-friendly cinema mornings on Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday mornings for local people. They show films in a very small, comfortable environment with refreshments provided. You do not have to live in the care home to go along but you do need to book in advance as seating is limited. They can also tell you what films are coming up. The local ones are:

- **Rivermere** care home, 64-70 Westerham Rd, Sevenoaks TN13 2PZ 01732 748400 [enquiries.rivermere@averyhealthcare.co.uk](mailto:enquiries.rivermere@averyhealthcare.co.uk)  
[www.averyhealthcare.co.uk](http://www.averyhealthcare.co.uk)
- **Weald Heights** care home, Bouchier Close, Sevenoaks TN13 1PD. Contact Amelia 01732 747700 [amelia.moore2@careuk.com](mailto:amelia.moore2@careuk.com) [www.careuk.com](http://www.careuk.com)
- **Lavender Fields** care home, High St, Seal TN15 0AE. Contact Andy 01732 755630, 07948 425249 [andrew.wilson@greensleeves.org.uk](mailto:andrew.wilson@greensleeves.org.uk)  
[www.greensleeves.org.uk](http://www.greensleeves.org.uk)
- **Emerson Grange** care home, Rowhill Rd, Swanley BR8 7FP. Contact Aileen 01322 610090 [emersonpark.haa2@cinnamoncc.com](mailto:emersonpark.haa2@cinnamoncc.com) [www.cinnamoncc.com](http://www.cinnamoncc.com)

It may also be worth approaching:

- **Golden Oldies**, St George's Church, Weald. Contact Sarah 01732 463458 [sarah\\_highview@hotmail.com](mailto:sarah_highview@hotmail.com)
- **Seniors Film Club** at Hillview School, Tonbridge. 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday in the month 10am (termtime only). £2. Contact Marnie 01732 352793  
[linesm@hillview.kent.sch.uk](mailto:linesm@hillview.kent.sch.uk)

**Befriending schemes.** Befriending may be suitable for people with mild or early dementia who feel lonely, isolated or vulnerable but only if they can remember when someone is calling. See our Social Activities information pack for a list of befriending schemes

**Lunch Clubs.** They may be suitable for people with mild dementia but not advanced dementia; phone the organiser to discuss. See our Social Activities information pack for a list of lunch clubs

**Re-engage tea parties.** For people over 75 who live alone and have little contact with family or friends. One Sunday each month volunteer drivers will take you to and from the party and the host will give you tea, cake and sandwiches either in their own home or sometimes in other community spaces. It's free and covers the immediate Sevenoaks area in other words north as far as Knockholt, east as far as Borough Green, south as far as Hildenborough and west as far as Westerham. People with mild dementia are welcome if accompanied by their carer or support worker. You can ask Age UK to refer you. 0800 716543 [info@reengage.org.uk](mailto:info@reengage.org.uk) [www.reengage.org.uk](http://www.reengage.org.uk)

**Drop-in sessions.** See our Social Activities information pack for a list of tea/coffee drop-in sessions as they may also be suitable for people with mild or early-stage dementia

## Keeping fit and healthy

- Age UK produce publications on staying steady, strength and balance exercises for healthy ageing 0800 169 6565.

- If the person has a garden you could encourage them to get outside – they could plant some seeds and look forward to seeing them grow
- You can create home versions of somebody's favourite sports, like ten pin bowling with plastic bottles, or using rolled up socks to play indoor bowls
- Ring Dementia UK on 0800 888 6678 for their leaflets on managing anxiety and depression, mouth care, cancer, relationships etc
- See also our Health & Wellbeing information pack for other exercise activities which are not specifically for people with dementia. It may be worth asking the organiser if they are suitable

**Badminton.** Dementia-friendly sessions in Tonbridge. Angel Centre. Usually 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month 07715 652846 [suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk](mailto:suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk)

**Basketball.** Dementia-friendly sessions with a foam ball in Tonbridge. Angel Centre. Usually 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month 07715 652846 [suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk](mailto:suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk)

**Boccia.** Dementia-friendly sessions in Tonbridge. Angel Centre. Usually 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month 07715 652846 [suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk](mailto:suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk)

**Cycling.** Dementia-friendly sessions on a static bike in Tonbridge. Angel Centre. Usually 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month 07715 652846 [suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk](mailto:suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk)

## Dance

- **Edenbridge.** Dementia-friendly dance sessions. Eden Centre, Four Elms Rd. Tuesdays 1.30-3pm. £36 for 12 weeks. Carers free. Contact Sevenoaks District Council 01732 227000 [communities@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:communities@sevenoaks.gov.uk)
- **Shoreham.** Dementia-friendly dance sessions. Village Hall, High St. Thursdays 10-11.30am. £36 for 12 weeks. Carers free. Contact Sevenoaks District Council 01732 227000 [communities@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:communities@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

**Darts.** Dementia-friendly soft darts sessions in Tonbridge. Angel Centre. Usually 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month 07715 652846 [suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk](mailto:suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk)

## Exercise at home

- **Love to Move** is a seated gymnastics programme for people living with dementia. You can download a pack from their website to try activities at home [www.britishgymnasticsfoundation.org/lovetomove](http://www.britishgymnasticsfoundation.org/lovetomove)
- **Vita Motion Robo-Platform.** This is an exercise machine for people with dementia which someone can sit, lie or stand on. You have a choice of sports, nature or music programmes to keep exercise interesting. It is produced by FIND Memory Care 0113 230 2046 [www.findsignage.co.uk](http://www.findsignage.co.uk)

**Gardening.** The Forget-me-Not allotment plot in Quakers Hall Lane, Sevenoaks is a dementia-friendly garden where you can do some weeding, watering, harvesting or simply sit and enjoy the fantastic scenery. Parking and seating is available on the plot.

**Golf.** Dementia-friendly golf mornings. 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month 2pm. Open session for experienced and new golfers with early stages of dementia or who need a bit of

support. Enjoy a round on the 9-hole course with support from a buddy, tuition on the driving range followed by coffee in the bar. First round £3; carers can play for free. Poulton Wood Golf Course, Higham Lane, Tonbridge TN11 9QR 01732 364039 [www.poultonwood.co.uk](http://www.poultonwood.co.uk) Contact: David Copsey - Head Golf Pro

**Golf putting.** Dementia-friendly sessions in Tonbridge. Angel Centre. Usually 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month 07715 652846 [suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk](mailto:suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk)

**Hand weights.** Dementia-friendly sessions in Tonbridge. Angel Centre. Usually 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month 07715 652846 [suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk](mailto:suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk)

### **Sight tests**

- Specsavers opticians in Sevenoaks have staff trained to help people with dementia have eye checks. 93 High St, Sevenoaks 01732 459588.
- Community Care Opticians can visit you at home. They also have staff trained to help people with dementia 01732 458424. See our Help at Home information pack for other opticians who may be able to visit you at home

**Swimming.** Dementia-friendly swimming sessions. £3.10, carers free. You may need to have an experienced swimmer with you. 07715 652846

[suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk](mailto:suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk)

- **Larkfield** Swimming Pool
- **Tonbridge** Swimming Pool

**Table Tennis.** Dementia-friendly sessions in Tonbridge. Angel Centre. Usually 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month 07715 652846 [suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk](mailto:suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk)

**Tennis.** Dementia-friendly short-tennis sessions in Tonbridge. Angel Centre. Usually 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month 07715 652846 [suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk](mailto:suzy.abbott@tmactive.co.uk)

### **Weight management courses**

If someone is at least 2 stone overweight or underweight, free courses are available to help you understand the relationship between food, exercise and weight control. This may also help people with dementia as it can affect the sense of smell, taste and ability to absorb nutrients. Trials show that people in early stages may benefit from nutritional supplements but not people in later stages.

- Sevenoaks District Council Healthy Living Team 01732 227000 [healthyliving@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:healthyliving@sevenoaks.gov.uk)
- Tonbridge & Malling Healthy Living Team 01732 876347 [healthy.living@tmbc.gov.uk](mailto:healthy.living@tmbc.gov.uk)

## **Peace of mind**

### **Simple mobile phones**

- You can get a factsheet on telephones by ringing Age UK 0800 169 6565
- Some people keep a mobile just for emergency use (sometimes known as "Granny in a Glovebox")

- Some organisations offer easy-to-use mobiles. The simplest mobiles have no screen or keypad. They have simple push buttons (between 2 and 12 buttons for known people and emergency contacts). The buttons can be personalised with photos and calls can be made by pressing on the name or photo. These phones are especially suitable for people with memory problems. One example is OwnFone on 0330 041 7263
- If you want something more complex you could look at Doro easy phones. They offer loud and clear sound, with Hearing Aid Compatibility, for calls you can hear wherever you are, large, separated keys and adjustable font sizes for easy dialling and texting, and a large easy to see display. They can be personalised with photos of family members and a GPS locator can be used if you get lost. You can use the direct dials to programme your favourite contacts and call them at the push of a button, or write and send SMS' and take photos using the direct buttons on the keypad. Some also enable you to access emails, internet browser and Facebook from your phone all in an easy to use manner. These are less suitable for some people with memory problems [www.doro.co.uk](http://www.doro.co.uk)
- Another company offering a range of phones is Emporia [www.emporia.eu](http://www.emporia.eu)
- However you should shop around. The Disabled Living Foundation can give you more information on choosing products for older and disabled people. 0300 999 0004

## Alarms

See our Help at Home information pack for general information on alarms and making sure people are OK

**GPS-enabled alarms.** These are the next step up from traditional alarms. They are suitable if you go out but are worried about having accidents or have dementia. They can work in the street as well as in the home or garden. They can be worn as a wristwatch or in other ways such as a pendant round the neck, on a bunch of keys, placed in a pocket or bag. Remember to weigh up peace of mind for you or your family against any loss of privacy. They can be helpful if you are in any of the following situations:

- If you need help away from your home. You do not need to be within range of a base unit
- If you are unaware that you need help or do not understand how to raise the alarm. The alarm can be raised in other ways as explained below
- If you need to be located by GPS. Your location can be sent directly to your family's mobile etc
- If you prefer to talk to your family rather than a monitoring centre (the monitoring centre can put you directly through to your family)
- If you get lost somewhere familiar and just want to be reassured
- If you wander out of pre-agreed "safe zones" such as not taking your usual route to the shops. Sends an alert
- If you go out in the middle of the night unexpectedly. Sends an alert if pre-programmed to do so
- Can be secured to your wrist if you are likely to take it off without realising

**Sensors and detectors.** There are a range of sensors and detectors including medication reminders which can be combined with alarms. For example, checking whether someone has gone to bed or if the bathroom has been used. Pagers can alert other family carers (rather than the monitoring centre) if the main family carer is asleep or in the garden when someone needs help. There are also recorded messages which will work for people who just need prompting. You can get sensors and detectors from the companies mentioned above.

- **Fall detectors.** Worn on the wrist or neck and can detect a fall. Ideal if you are frail or black out. Also if you would be unaware you needed to press a button or needed help. Can also detect slips and trips
- **Bed and chair sensors.** Sends an alert if you don't go to bed or get up by a certain time or if you've got up and not returned to a bed or chair possibly due to a fall or forgetting. Pressure mats can detect if you are by the front door or have become inactive for some reason
- **Property exit sensors.** Helpful if you get confused and go out unexpectedly, especially at night. Sends an alert if you open a door at an unspecified time or forget to lock the front door. Monitors if you are moving around normally, whether your carer has visited and how long they stayed. They will make sure you're OK and if concerned, they will notify a family member or carer.
- **Temperature extreme sensors.** Detects extreme rise or fall in temperature such as a forgotten boiling saucepan, if you have left your door open and whether your home is too hot or too cold. The monitoring centre will advise you on a suitable course of action
- **Smoke detectors.** Sounds an alarm and calls the monitoring centre automatically. They will check with you whether they need to contact the Fire Service for you. Heat detectors can be used in kitchens and bathrooms
- **Flood detectors.** Gives early warning of potential floods near sinks, baths and toilets by sounding an alarm and calling the monitoring centre. There are also magi-plugs which release water when it gets to a certain level and change colour if too hot or cold
- **Carbon monoxide detectors.** Sounds an alarm and calls the monitoring centre automatically. They will speak with you and advise you to leave or not enter the property. They will also contact Transco (gas company) for you. Gas detectors will send an alert if cookers and fires have been left on but not ignited
- **Movement sensors.** Can turn lamps on if you get up or detect if you have gone to hazardous areas or have become inactive for some reason
- **Medication dispensers.** Sends you a visual and audible alert when medication needs to be taken. If time slots are missed, an alert is sent to the monitoring centre who will contact you
- **Bogus caller alarms.** Usually wall mounted by your front door so you can send a discreet and silent alert to the monitoring centre if you feel threatened or uneasy with a visitor
- **Door contacts.** Can be attached to cupboards or domestic appliances to monitor activity, such as whether you're eating or following hygiene routines on a regular basis
- **Epilepsy sensors.** Bed sensors which monitor heart rate and breathing patterns to detect epileptic seizures

## Other home monitoring systems

- Proximity Care offer Proximity Buttons. These are small, light sensor buttons that you wear. It sends a text alert to your carer's smartphone if you wander. It costs about £40 so is cheaper than the tracking devices above but is not as sophisticated [natalie@proximitycare.co.uk](mailto:natalie@proximitycare.co.uk) [www.proximitycare.co.uk](http://www.proximitycare.co.uk)
- Just Checking Ltd offer wireless sensors placed around the home. They will send text or email alerts to families if there are no signs of activity in the morning, a carer hasn't arrived, a door has been left open, you have gone out at night or someone has visited at an unusual time. Can be useful to identify what the issues are 01564 785100 [www.justchecking.co.uk](http://www.justchecking.co.uk)
- The Stay Safe app uses GPS technology to give a live update of your location on a visual map on a mobile phone screen. This only works if both parties have it switched on. Can be downloaded free of charge from the App Store or Google Play. See Family Matters for more information. [www.fmstaysafe.co.uk](http://www.fmstaysafe.co.uk)
- Pathway for Care offer doorbell facial recognition devices, digital memory aids and GPS trackers. Pathway for Care Ltd 01737 904204 [www.pathwayforcare.com](http://www.pathwayforcare.com)

## Other ways of making sure people are OK

- **Kent Carers' Emergency Card.** This is a card which carers can carry so if you have an accident or become ill, people can contact Kent County Council on a 24-hour emergency contact number to activate a pre-arranged emergency plan to ensure the person you are caring for continues to be looked after. You can get it from INVOLVE 0300 081 0005 [communitynavigation@involvekent.org.uk](mailto:communitynavigation@involvekent.org.uk) If you live in the Swanley area you can get it from IMAGO 0300 011 1965 [navigation@imago.community](mailto:navigation@imago.community)
- **Memory Problems Emergency Card.** This is a card that a person with dementia can carry which will tell people that they have memory problems and may need help. It will ask people to be understanding and patient and give names and numbers of family or friends who can be contacted if they need help. If you are caring for someone there is also a card which can alert people that you look after someone who depends on you should you become ill or have an accident (however this card does not involve a pre-arranged emergency plan like the Kent Carer's Emergency Card above). You can get both these cards from Dementia UK 0800 888 6678 [www.dementiauk.org](http://www.dementiauk.org)
- **Search & Rescue.** You are advised to take a clear passport-style photo of anyone you care for. That way, in the event that they should wander off, a recent photo will make it easier to find them and get them home safe and sound. You can also get an "At risk of going missing" form to record information that could help Police and Search & Rescue teams determine where and how to look. This can contribute enormously to the success of any search. For further advice contact Kent Search & Rescue 01622 843005 [www.ksar.co.uk](http://www.ksar.co.uk) You can get help filling in the form from Heart Kent Hospice dementia service, Preston Hall, Aylesford ME20 7PU 01622 792200 [enquiries@hokh.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@hokh.co.uk)
- **Shop Safe, Stay Safe.** In Sevenoaks District you can register with the scheme to provide details of a family member, friend or carer to contact in an emergency. You are given a keyring with a code. If you need help, shops who



have signed up to the scheme can ring Sevenoaks District Council with the code and they will ring the emergency contacts. It is free. To sign up contact Sevenoaks District Council 01732 227000

[community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:community.safety@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

- **Identity Cards.** It may be a good idea for you to carry an identity card explaining that you are vulnerable. This can help if you have an accident, or are unsure of where you are as the card can provide details of emergency contacts. This information could be sewn into a jacket or handbag so that it's not easily removed. Available from Admiral Nursing Direct 0800 888 6678
- **MedicAlert.** Provide identification bracelets engraved with details of your condition, an ID number and a 24-hour emergency phone number 01908 951045 [www.medicalert.org.uk](http://www.medicalert.org.uk)
- **Contact 4 Me.** This is another system with an ID card or bracelet. This enables the police and other concerned people to find out key contact numbers including family, friends and GP 0870 389 2299 [www.contact4me.com](http://www.contact4me.com)
- **Keep in Touch (KIT) wristbands.** These are mobile phones that look like wristwatches. They have GPS positioning and tracking and an emergency button that if pressed will call a nominated carer. [www.kitwristband.com](http://www.kitwristband.com)

## Home safety

- **Home safety visits**  
Kent Fire & Rescue Service Safe and Well Team carry out home safety visits to provide advice for people who may be at risk in their homes; this can be due to memory issues, disabilities or smoking. Following an assessment of your home, they can provide fire prevention devices such as fire retardant bedding and blankets, smoke alarms for people including those with hearing & visual problems, cooker switches, letterbox sealing and safety ashtrays. They will also replace battery-operated smoke alarms over 10 years old. They can also fit lockable covers for electric sockets and arrange lockable gas valves to shut off gas cookers for people with dementia 0800 923 7000, 01622 692121. [home@kent.fire-uk.org](mailto:home@kent.fire-uk.org) [www.kent.fire-uk.org](http://www.kent.fire-uk.org) You can also ask a Police Community Support Officer to pop round if you are vulnerable to scams. Ring West Kent Police on 101.
- **Minor repairs to stairs, floors and steps, keysafes etc. Also safety & security repairs.** You can apply for a **Safe & Secure Grant** if you live with a health condition at home (including dementia) or are over 60. Grants can be obtained for grab rails, chair raisers, bath seats, raised toilet seats, ramps and stair rails. You can also apply for additional things to keep you safe such as mortice locks, door chains, window locks and even new front doors. There are also aids to help those with memory problems who might, for example, leave the bath running or forget to close the front door or need colour and contrast to aid orientation in their home. The work must cost less than £1000. These grants are discretionary but are not means-tested. Disabled Facilities Grants are available for major adaptations such as flush-floor showers. Contact your local council and ask for the Private Sector Housing Team

## Scams

See our Money Matters information pack for information on:

- Avoiding scams
- Spotting scams
- Raising your awareness of scams.
- What to do if you have been scammed
- Telephone scams
- What to do if you get a nuisance or scam call
- Reducing nuisance calls
- Bank scam calls
- Courier fraud
- Computer scam calls
- Reducing scam calls
- Stopping scam calls
- Fraudulent text messages
- Postal scams
- Reducing junk mail
- Reducing spam mail
- Fake parcel delivery cards
- Internet scams
- Staying safe online
- Doorstep scams
- Cowboy traders
- Checking ID of doorstep callers
- Cold callers
- Video doorbells
- Bogus caller alarms
- Home security
- Pension scams

**Stopping yourself from making premium rate phone calls.** It can be distressing and expensive for a person if they make repeated phone calls to certain numbers, especially premium rate ones. BT can set up Network Controlled Calling which allows dialling only 10 numbers such as friends, family, GP etc but blocks others. 0800 919591

[www.bt.com/includingyou/redesign2012/assets/downloads/NetworkControlledCalling.pdf](http://www.bt.com/includingyou/redesign2012/assets/downloads/NetworkControlledCalling.pdf)

**Stopping compulsive shopping.** Some people are prone to buying items online at night or at times when feeling low or lonely. They may not really want it but often struggle to send it back causing financial difficulties. Money & Mental Health is a charity which has developed a digital tool called "Shopper Stopper". It is free to download and allows users (or their families) to "close" online shops during the periods of time they find hard to resist buying things

[www.moneyandmentalhealth.org/the-shopper-stopper](http://www.moneyandmentalhealth.org/the-shopper-stopper)

**Lifebook.** This enables you to record all sorts of useful details which could be invaluable to a family member or a friend if they need to locate important information about you in an emergency. You simply follow the step-by-step instructions to fill in

the various sections with your details, contacts and locations of important documents. The life contacts section deals with recording details of your insurance policies, banks, credit cards and other financial arrangements. The LifeBook is available in both a booklet and computer versions. More information from Age UK 0800 678 1602 [www.ageuk.org.uk/lifebook](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/lifebook)

**Vulnerability Registration Service.** The Vulnerability Registration Service allows vulnerable people a single place to register your status, helping you avoid repeating the same difficult conversations every time you engage with organisations. You can register yourself or ask an organisation to register for you. It covers financial services, local authorities, housing associations, insurance, banking, credit, energy, telecoms and retail. When most organisations see that you are registered, they take you out of any automated processes – giving more care and consideration to your needs. All they need is your name, address and date of birth. If circumstances change, it's easy to come off the register [info@vregservice.co.uk](mailto:info@vregservice.co.uk)

## Benefits and grants

You can get advice about any of these benefits from Age UK 01732 454108 [www.ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk](http://www.ageuksevenoaksandtonbridge.org.uk)

- Do not be put off by the wording on forms; we can help you fill them in. Age UK can help you at our office or we may be able to visit you or arrange for DWP to visit you 01732 454108
- Citizens' Advice can also help you. Free phone advice Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. Some office appointments may be possible.
  - Aylesford, Larkfield, New Ash Green, Otford, Sevenoaks, Snodland, Swanley and Tonbridge 0808 278 7810
  - Edenbridge and Westerham 0808 278 7962
- **Attendance Allowance.** If someone is over 65 and has dementia they are eligible to apply for Attendance Allowance. This is a government benefit which is not linked to income or savings and is not taxed. It is for people whose health has declined and are finding things more difficult as a result.
- **Personal Independence Payment.** If someone is under 65 and has dementia they are eligible to apply for Personal Independence Payment.
- **Council Tax reductions.** People with dementia are also eligible to apply for a reduction in their Council Tax on the grounds of "mental impairment". They should apply for Attendance Allowance or Personal Independence Payment first.
  - If they live alone (or with a partner who also has dementia), they may be exempt from paying it altogether
  - If they live with a partner (eg husband, wife etc) who does not have dementia then they may get a 25% reduction
  - If they live with a partner who is on a low income and has little savings then they should also both apply for a reduction on these grounds as well as for their dementia
  - If they live with a carer who is not their partner (eg grown-up son, daughter, live-in carer etc) and do not live with anyone else then they may get a 50% reduction

- If they live with more than one other person (for example living with both their partner and a grown-up son or daughter) then the rules may be different
- **Carer's Allowance.** If you have given up work to look after someone you may be eligible to claim Carer's Allowance or Carer's Credit
- **Universal Credit (including Employment & Support Allowance and Income Support).** Someone may be eligible if they have had to give up work as a result of developing dementia.
- **Pension Credit.** If you have a low state pension and low income/savings then you may be eligible for Pension Credit to top up your pension. If you get a disability benefit such as Attendance Allowance or Personal Independence Payment and you live alone or live with a partner who is also disabled then this is also taken into account so you should check this with Age UK.

**Social Services.** Carers and people with dementia can have an assessment of needs from the local council. They can provide a package of care and advise on what local services can provide support. This can include personal care, day care, respite care, meals on wheels and equipment or aids. They may also be able to make a financial contribution. Only the financial details of the person with dementia have to be disclosed and this does not include the property they live in if it's shared with a partner or spouse 03000 416161 [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk)

**If someone is in financial hardship.** Many charities offer one-off grants to people on a low income to help replace "essential" items such as basic furniture, carpets and household appliances or help pay utility bills including:

- Friends of the Elderly 020 7730 8263 [enquiries@fote.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@fote.org.uk) [www.fote.org.uk](http://www.fote.org.uk)
- Society for the Assistance of Ladies in Reduced Circumstances 0300 365 1886 [www.salrc.org.uk](http://www.salrc.org.uk)

## Advocacy

If a person with dementia feels that their views are not being listened to then you may be able to get help representing their views from:

**Citizens' Advice.** Free phone advice Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. Some office appointments may be possible.

- Aylesford, Larkfield, New Ash Green, Otford, Sevenoaks, Snodland, Swanley and Tonbridge 0808 278 7810
- Edenbridge and Westerham 0808 278 7962

**INVOLVE.** Advocacy and help representing your views 03000 810005

**The Advocacy People (formerly SEAP).** PO Box 375, Hastings TN34 9HU 0330 440 9000 [info@theadvocacypeople.co.uk](mailto:info@theadvocacypeople.co.uk) [www.theadvocacypeople.co.uk](http://www.theadvocacypeople.co.uk) May be able to do home visits.

## Managing finances and Powers of Attorney

**Managing finances.** Age UK may be able to help with applications for Attendance Allowance and check that someone is receiving any other benefits that they may be

eligible for. It is a good idea to set up direct debits and standing orders to ensure bills are paid on time. When someone is struggling to remember a PIN the bank can replace bank cards with one that requires a signature. Joint bank accounts can be set up or a Third Party Mandate on an account so that a family member or friend can help manage the bank account. Banks can explain how this works but the person involved still needs to be able to make decisions.

**Lasting Powers of Attorney.** It is very important to try to set up Lasting Powers of Attorney while a person still has mental capacity (in other words while they can recognise and understand what they will be signing). This enables family or friends (or a solicitor) to manage finances, property and affairs as well as health and welfare when someone can no longer make decisions. It means family or friends will know any wishes about future care. This may include difficult decisions such as whether someone would prefer to die at home or in hospital if they have a choice. Ring Dementia UK on 0800 888 6678 for their leaflet on lasting power of attorney.

- The cheapest option is to fill in the forms yourself but they are quite long and complicated. You can get the forms and guidance from the government's Office of the Public Guardian 0300 456 0300. You will need to pay to register it [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-public-guardian](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-public-guardian) [www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney](http://www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney)
- Another option is to get help from the Heart of Kent Hospice dementia service, Preston Hall, Aylesford ME20 7PU 01622 792200 [enquiries@hokh.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@hokh.co.uk)
- If there is a particular complication or if you prefer you can ask a solicitor to do it for you but they will charge a lot more.
- If someone has not already drawn up a will they may also wish to do so.
- See also our Legal Advice & Power of Attorney information pack for further information
- Age UK produce publications on Power of Attorney before losing mental capacity 0800 169 6565. The Office of the Public Guardian and solicitors can also help you

### **Court of Protection**

- If you do not set up Powers of Attorney and no longer have mental capacity your family will need to go through the Court of Protection which is a lot longer and even more expensive so it is a good idea to do it as soon as possible. 0300 456 4600 [www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/court-of-protection](http://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/court-of-protection)
- You can get help applying to the Court from a solicitor
- Age UK produce publications on what can be done if you have lost mental capacity and deprivation of liberty 0800 169 6565. The Alzheimer's Society and solicitors may also be able to help.

**Legal advice for older people.** Age UK cannot recommend specific legal advisers. However, some solicitors may specialise in helping people who have dementia:

- **Solicitors for the Elderly** (SFE) is an independent, national organisation of lawyers who provide specialist legal advice for older and vulnerable people, their families and carers. They specialise in wills, Power of Attorney, living wills, tax planning, asset preservation, trusts, probate, paying for care, NHS continuing healthcare, Court of Protection and elder abuse. 0844 567 6173 [www.solicitorsfortheelderly.com](http://www.solicitorsfortheelderly.com)

- **Pathways through Dementia.** A charity which helps people plan ahead. They can answer legal enquiries 020 8605 3992 [www.pathwaysthroughdementia.org](http://www.pathwaysthroughdementia.org)
- **Local solicitors.** See our Legal Advice & Power of Attorney information pack for a list of local solicitors

## Getting around

**Bus Passes.** Concessionary bus passes are available for older and disabled people including those with dementia. Older people are eligible once they reach the state pension age for women regardless of whether they are men or women. Companions such as carers may sometimes be entitled as well if someone can show they are unable to travel alone. Older people have to pay to replace lost bus passes. If you are prone to losing them, ask the council to change your bus pass to a disabled bus pass because of your dementia (you will need a letter from your GP) and then you won't have to pay to replace it if you lose it. Apply to Kent County Council, Invicta House, Maidstone ME14 1XX 03000 418383 [buspass@kent.gov.uk](mailto:buspass@kent.gov.uk) [www.kent.gov.uk/buspass](http://www.kent.gov.uk/buspass)

**Driving.** If someone has been diagnosed with dementia they can often still drive safely for a long time. However they have a legal obligation to notify the Driving & Vehicle Licensing Agency and their insurance company so they can register it 0300 790 6806 [www.gov.uk/dementia-and-driving](http://www.gov.uk/dementia-and-driving) They may talk to the person's GP or ask Kent Community Health NHS Trust to carry out a free assessment on whether they can still drive safely. This assessment can also be requested directly but may be charged for 0300 013 4886 [www.kentcht.nhs.uk](http://www.kentcht.nhs.uk)

**Disabled parking permits.** If you have dementia or look after someone with dementia you may be eligible for a Blue Badge disabled parking permit. It is quickest to apply online but paper forms are also available. Contact Kent County Council, Invicta House, Maidstone ME14 1XX 03000 416262 [county.hall@kent.gov.uk](mailto:county.hall@kent.gov.uk) [www.kent.gov.uk/bluebadge](http://www.kent.gov.uk/bluebadge) If you need help filling in the form:

- Age UK. We can help you at our office or we may be able to visit you 01732 454108
- Tonbridge Castle Gateway 01732 770929, 844522
- Citizens' Advice can also help you. Free phone advice Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. Some office appointments may be possible.
  - Aylesford, Larkfield, New Ash Green, Otford, Sevenoaks, Snodland, Swanley and Tonbridge 0808 278 7810
  - Edenbridge and Westerham 0808 278 7962

**Public toilets.** The National Key Scheme provides a key to use many disabled toilets in public places such as shopping centres, bus and train stations, pubs, cafes and restaurants. It costs £4.75 including postage and there is a smartphone app giving directions to the nearest toilet 0330 995 0400 [shop@disabilityrightsuk.org](http://shop@disabilityrightsuk.org) [www.disabilityrightsuk.org](http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org)

**Continence.** Incontinence can be embarrassing and prevent someone from leaving their home. GPs can provide a continence assessment. The Bladder & Bowel Foundation can provide information and support 0845 345 0165

[www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org](http://www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org) You could also look at NHS Choices [www.nhs.uk/livewell/incontinence](http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/incontinence) or ring Dementia UK on 0800 888 6678 for their leaflet. You can buy continence pads in chemists and from many companies which supply them such as Modern Living Aids 0800 043 0852 [www.modernlivingaids.co.uk](http://www.modernlivingaids.co.uk) or the Complete Care Shop [www.completecareshop.co.uk](http://www.completecareshop.co.uk) or Nottingham Rehab Supplies 0345 121 8111 [www.nrs-uk.co.uk](http://www.nrs-uk.co.uk)

## Pets

Volunteers at the Cinnamon Trust can help with pet care eg walking dogs, fetch pet food, fostering pets when their owners are in hospital. They may also be able to care for pets if someone can no longer look after them 01736 757900

[www.cinnamon.org.uk](http://www.cinnamon.org.uk)

## Seniors Helping Seniors

Can help with pet care. £24.60 per hour. Do not provide personal care (help with washing, dressing, medication etc) 01732 495665

[enquiries@seniorshelpingseniors.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@seniorshelpingseniors.co.uk) [www.seniorshelpingseniors.co.uk](http://www.seniorshelpingseniors.co.uk)

## Housing options

- **Sheltered housing.** Most retirement housing, almshouses or warden-assisted housing schemes will not accept people with dementia if they have reached a point where they can no longer live independently.
- **Care homes.** If someone needs to go into a care home, many residential and nursing homes specialise in dementia. See our Care Homes information pack for a list of local care homes
- **Dementia Care Matters.** They are trying an approach which involves accepting the person's perceived reality rather than trying to correct it. There is some evidence that this makes people happier but it requires a lot of effort on the part of family and carers. The nearest care homes adopting this approach are Hindhead in Surrey and Hove in Sussex 01273 242335. [www.dementiacarematters.com](http://www.dementiacarematters.com)
- **Harmonia Dementia Village.** This is a new gated community in Dover which is changing the way people live with dementia. They will live in shared houses but without locked doors; there is an unobtrusive boundary fence. You need to weigh up possibly a better quality of life against possibly more risk 01304 222568 [ekhuft.theharmoniavillage@nhs.net](mailto:ekhuft.theharmoniavillage@nhs.net)
- **Paying for care.** If someone has a certain amount of savings they must pay for their care. Social Services may fully or partly pay when there are lower levels of savings. In certain circumstances, for example, unpredictable forms of dementia, the NHS will pay for care. Age UK ( 01732 454108) can give information on "NHS Continuing Healthcare" and the Alzheimer's Society (0300 222 1122) provide a booklet on "When does the NHS pay for care?" or see the NHS website: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/pages/nhs-continuing-care.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/pages/nhs-continuing-care.aspx) Some companies offer financial advice to people looking for care. A company called Symponia provides a free care fees planning handbook [info@symponia.co.uk](mailto:info@symponia.co.uk) [www.symponia.co.uk](http://www.symponia.co.uk) See also

our Money Matters information pack for other companies who offer financial advice to people looking for care.

- **Elderly Accommodation Counsel.** You can get advice on housing options from the Elderly Accommodation Counsel including whether and when to move into a care home 0800 377 7070 [www.housingcare.org](http://www.housingcare.org)
- **Relatives and Residents Association.** This charity runs a helpline giving information and support to carers helping someone make the move into a care home or with concerns about the care someone might be receiving 020 7359 8136 [info@relres.org](mailto:info@relres.org) [www.relres.org](http://www.relres.org)
- **Supportmatch Homeshare Service.** 01604 905517, 07742 807677, 07847 072490, 020 3633 6066 [info@supportmatch.co.uk](mailto:info@supportmatch.co.uk) [www.supportmatch.co.uk](http://www.supportmatch.co.uk)  
This is a service where a householder who has a spare room offers it to a homesharer in exchange for 10 hours per week of companionship, overnight security and some practical help around your home. This could include domestic help such as cooking or shopping but does not include any personal care. Supportmatch charge the older person £99 per month and the homesharer £159 per month rent. It may be suitable for people with mild early-stage dementia.

## Abuse

See our Health & Wellbeing information pack for information on:

- Types of abuse
- What you can do to protect yourself and others
- Local and national advice helplines
- What happens if you report it to Social Services

## Helping out with research

This may give people with dementia and their carers peace of mind knowing that they will be able to contribute to the improvement of diagnosis and treatment of the disease for future generations. It may give you opportunities to access new treatments and a chance to "fight back" making you feel part of something valuable and reducing social isolation.

- **Registering your interest.** If you would simply like to register your interest in research so that you can be told about appropriate studies then contact the Dementia Research Infoline run by Alzheimer's Research UK 0300 111 5111 [infoline@alzheimersresearchuk.org](mailto:infoline@alzheimersresearchuk.org) [www.joindementiaresearch.nihr.ac.uk](http://www.joindementiaresearch.nihr.ac.uk)
- **Time for Dementia Programme.** An opportunity for families affected by dementia to help inform and educate student nurses, paramedics and speech therapists in Kent to understand more about dementia and how it affects people. Students visit a family affected by dementia at home 5-6 times over a two-year period so you can share first-hand experiences and perspectives. If you would like to take part please contact the Alzheimer's Society. Laura Pack-Hagan 07763 582643 [laura.pack-hagan@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:laura.pack-hagan@alzheimers.org.uk) or Lauren Wonnacott 07713 779582 [lauren.wonnacott@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:lauren.wonnacott@alzheimers.org.uk)
- **Dementia Registry.** West London Mental Health Trust are carrying out various studies looking at how thinking and memory might be affected,



investigating medication to slow down memory loss and the effects of drinking habits. 020 8483 1834.

- **Dog Assisted Therapy.** Dementia Dog, Dogs for Good and Alzheimer Scotland are evaluating the benefits of dog assisted therapy. You can find out more from Karen Shearsmith-Farthing, Occupational Therapist & Cognitive Behavioural Therapist. 07570 808135 [karen@therapyforchange.org.uk](mailto:karen@therapyforchange.org.uk) [www.therapyforchange.org.uk](http://www.therapyforchange.org.uk)
- **MINDSET.** This is a clinical study to test out a new drug as part of research. If you would like to take part 0800 048 8876 [www.alzheimersglobalstudy.com](http://www.alzheimersglobalstudy.com)
- **Neuronix complementary treatment.** This is a relatively new non-invasive and non-pharmaceutical private treatment for mild to moderate Alzheimer's which can be complementary to medication. Someone may benefit from it if they can't tolerate drugs due to side effects. It may improve cognitive capabilities and quality of life over an extended period 0808 189 2000 [patientinfo@neuronixmedical.com](mailto:patientinfo@neuronixmedical.com) [www.neuronixmedical.com](http://www.neuronixmedical.com)
- **Re:Cognition Health.** Their clinical trials centres offer those who are eligible earlier access to new medication designed to slow down or halt progression of memory loss and boost memory in mild cognitive impairment or Alzheimer's disease. If you have private medical insurance, you will need to be referred by your GP and insurer. If you are paying for treatment yourself, contact directly 020 3355 3536 [referrals@re-cognitionhealth.com](mailto:referrals@re-cognitionhealth.com) [www.recognitionhealth.com](http://www.recognitionhealth.com)

## Raising awareness

If you are interested in raising awareness about dementia, you could contact:

- **Dementia Friendly Kent.** Information about Kent's Dementia Friendly Communities. Contact Laura Summers or Jo Evans 07885 97774, 07825 712701 [dementiafriendlykent@kent.gov.uk](mailto:dementiafriendlykent@kent.gov.uk) [laura.summers2@kent.gov.uk](mailto:laura.summers2@kent.gov.uk) [www.dementiafriendlykent.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriendlykent.org.uk)
- **Dementia Friends** 01245 454319 [www.dementiafriends.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriends.org.uk)  
Sevenoaks District Council and other local authorities offer free awareness sessions for organisations on actions they can take to make things easier for people living with dementia 01732 227000 [healthy.living@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:healthy.living@sevenoaks.gov.uk) [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk)
- **Sevenoaks Area Dementia Friendly Community.** The council works with other agencies to make their area more dementia-friendly 01732 759854 [elaine.murray@thegoodcaregroup.com](mailto:elaine.murray@thegoodcaregroup.com)
- **Swanley Area Dementia Friendly Community.** The council works with other agencies to make their area more dementia-friendly. [geoff.parsons3@btinternet.com](mailto:geoff.parsons3@btinternet.com)
- **Tonbridge Dementia Friendly Community.** The Council works with other agencies to make their area more dementia-friendly. They offer free awareness sessions for organisations on actions they can take to make things easier for people living with dementia 07887 553467 [dementiafriendstonbridge@gmail.com](mailto:dementiafriendstonbridge@gmail.com)
- **West Kent Memorybilias Service User Group** (part of DEEP – the Dementia Engagement & Empowerment Project) 01622 725000 [www.dementiavoices.org.uk](http://www.dementiavoices.org.uk)

## Reducing risks for your family

### Can you find out if you will get dementia?

- Nobody can say if you will definitely get it
- If you have had it in your family, you can pay privately to have a blood test. This will establish whether you have a genetic probability of getting it but it is only a test of risk; it is not definite
- It may be unwise to have it as it may cause anxiety and there is no cure
- It may be better to make changes in your lifestyle to reduce risk

**Reducing the risk of getting dementia.** The biggest risk is age. There is also a possible genetic risk for some people. You can't stop yourself ageing but you can reduce other risks:

- First of all there are the obvious things such as healthier eating, keeping fit, stopping smoking, reducing drinking etc. Keeping an eye on your weight, blood pressure and any underlying diseases such as diabetes or heart problems will also help reduce your dementia risk.
- However there are also less obvious things you can do. For example, getting more sleep is very important. Research suggests you need at least 8 hours (ideally throughout your life!) for the brain to effectively "clean" itself. Spinal fluid washes the brain during sleep. The effect is similar to pressing a "Save" button on a computer to preserve your memories. Sleeping effectively cements any memories that have been acquired during the day
- Keeping active mentally; your brain will work better if it is being used. Reading or doing puzzles such as crosswords and sudoku may help.
- Keeping up with current affairs, doing meditation, using computers can all help. Age UK offers computer tuition if you need it at our Hollybush Day Centre in Sevenoaks.
- Physical exercise may also help eg walking, gardening, dancing and cycling.
- Learning to read a map and walking can deliver both mental and physical benefits.
- Taking part in social activities may reduce the risk of dementia as well. Research suggests that learning and speaking a second language can delay it by up to 4 years. Especially learning challenging ones such as Chinese but even French/German/Spanish/Italian may help. You don't have to learn to speak it perfectly. Age UK can give you details of conversation groups where you can practise speaking languages locally.

No current medication can have this amount of delaying effect.

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