

# engage.



Community Ambassadors



The Big Knit



Capstone Dementia Centre



Ultra Challenge



# FIVE THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

## *Do you have capacity to make your own decisions?*

What would you say if we told you there was no definition of capacity? Many people are often misdiagnosed with the ability to make decisions, and this can have a catastrophic impact upon them and their family. Do you know how to test for capacity?

## *What happens if I do not have a will?*

There are more people in this country who have not made a will than have. They are not taking action to protect the future of their family. If you have not made a will those you want may not inherit.

## *What happens if someone I love lacks capacity?*

Without lasting powers of attorney you will not be able to make decisions about your loved one's finances and health and welfare. How could this affect you and your family?

## *When did you last review your finances?*

Things get tighter financially as we get older. Salaries stop. Income fixes and costs keep increasing. When did you last check you were getting the best interest on your savings or were claiming all the benefits you are entitled to?

## *Have you thought about your future?*

Getting older doesn't have to be scary if you plan. There is so much information out there it can be confusing. Have you thought about if you are unwell? What happens if you become ill? long term care or short-term hospital stays? Who will feed the cat?

*It's easy to get this sorted out if you just speak with the right people.*

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**[www.argolifeandlegacy.co.uk](http://www.argolifeandlegacy.co.uk)**

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& legacy**



# Contents Winter 2022

**Our Services** ..... 6 - 12

**Volunteering** ..... 14

**Latest news**

Age UK Medway Lottery ..... 15

The Together Fund ..... 15

Battle of the High Street 2021..... 16

Friston House Donation ..... 17

Big Knit Update ..... 17

The ALF Principle ..... 18

Community Ambassadors ..... 19

**What we've have been up to** ..... 20 - 22

**Our Charity Shop**

Why you should shop ..... 24 - 25  
second-hand

**Nick's Ultra Challenge experience..** 28 - 29

**How to support us** ..... 30



## Rogers House Residential Care Home

A warm and welcoming non-profit care home for older people, specialising in dementia care and offering short term and permanent stays.

Established in the local community of Wigmore for nearly 30 years, Rogers House has great community links and provides person centered care in a homely and friendly environment.



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rogers.house@rapporthc.co.uk ♦ 01634 262266

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It's Too Late



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Email us: [info@regainhearing.co.uk](mailto:info@regainhearing.co.uk)  
13 Market Buildings, Maidstone,  
Kent. ME14 1HP



### Chatham

Call us: 0800 028 6763  
Email us: [info@regainhearing.co.uk](mailto:info@regainhearing.co.uk)  
The Joiners Shop, The Historic Dockyard,  
Chatham, Kent. ME4 4TZ

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in noise

### Free

Aftercare service  
Your warranty on all hearing aids

### Independent

All makes and models available





# Welcome...

...to the winter edition of Engage, our customer magazine...



## Meet the team...

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Which we distribute to our customers, members, stakeholders and local community twice a year. We hope through this edition, as with past editions, we can share with you the very latest news from our charity group, and talk about some of the exciting new initiatives we are bringing to life over the coming weeks and months.

As this is our first edition in the New Year, let me first extend my very best wishes to you all for a happy and prosperous New Year. The year of 2022 brings with it the opportunity for us all to hopefully put the past two very difficult years behind us, and move forward with our plans to re-invigorate the charity, its services and reach more of Medway's older people than ever before, something that our staff and volunteer team are very excited about. Within the following pages, you can read about our new Community Ambassadors, which are starting very soon, and a great new project to underpin excellent customer service and staff reward and retention called the ALF Principle.

We know that every time a person contacts us for support or assistance, it is important that we listen carefully to the request for help and meet that request with as much support and relevant services as we can - not just some of the time, but every time. This ensures that when you contact us, you tell us just once about what you

need and you let us do the rest, assuring you of a holistic wrap around package of services that allow you to Achieve Life's Fullness (ALF).

I hope over the coming months, that if you see us advertising our services, or are already a customer, that you will notice the messaging from us which talks about our ALF Principle in every way possible, with the hope that our staff, volunteers and services take the shape of something that you will find supportive and useful, as well as exciting and relevant. It is important to us that we are shaped by what you tell us you want and need, and as such, we will be encouraging you to tell us when a staff member goes over and above to help, or tell us when we fall short, so we can put that right.

Medway has a huge amount to offer the older population, and we hope to be at the front of your mind when considering how you spend your time and money on services you like.

I hope you find the following pages useful and informative, and that this edition gives you some exciting teasers about what's happening in the coming spring.

Remember, we are here when you need us, just contact us directly and let us know what you need.

*John* **John Norley**  
Chief Executive Officer

## About Us

Since its foundation in 1974, the charity formerly known as Age Concern has existed in several guises providing services across the Medway towns. It is now proud to be a local brand partner of the national Age UK charity.

### We provide services with a real impact

Age UK Medway is a charity working in the community to support older people in Medway, their families and their carers. We want everyone to be able to Achieve Life's Fullness, and that's why we do what we do. Even as

people grow older, we want everyone to still feel as young as they used to.

Each service we offer is designed to support the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of our clients, and to help them remain independent, and with choice and control in their lives. They are run by experienced and trained staff, all familiar with the challenges faced by older people, and who know how to ensure each individual gets the most out of the service.

# Our Services

## Mainstream Day Care

Delivered from The Mackenney Centre in Gillingham, our mainstream day care service provides social interaction for individuals aged over 50 and living in Medway.

For a daily charge you can look forward to a full day including:

- Hot drinks, refreshments and a freshly prepared two-course lunch

- Transport to and from the centre in one of our minibuses
- A variety of events and activities
- Accessible gardens, where you can enjoy some fresh air, or maybe a little light gardening activity.

To arrange a free taster session just call: **01634 380195** or email [enquiries@ageukmedway.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageukmedway.org.uk)



## Meal Delivery Squad

Our Meal Delivery Squad will bring you a hot, freshly cooked midday meal and dessert, prepared in our 5\* kitchen and delivered directly to your door, for just a small one-off charge. You can even add a snack pack consisting of a fresh sandwich, crisps, a sweet treat and juice for a small fee.

We cater to all dietary requirements, and use locally sourced ingredients to prepare traditional and nutritious meals.

Contact us: **01634 380195**  
[enquiries@ageukmedway.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageukmedway.org.uk)



# Dementia Services

## Dementia Day Care

Our specialist day services are available at our Capstone Day Centre in Chatham, as well as the Pat Warner Suite in Gillingham, to anyone diagnosed with Dementia or memory problems.

A day at either of our specialist centres includes:

- Refreshments and lunch

- Transport to and from the centre in one of our minibuses
- A variety of events and activities specifically designed for people living with Dementia or memory problems.

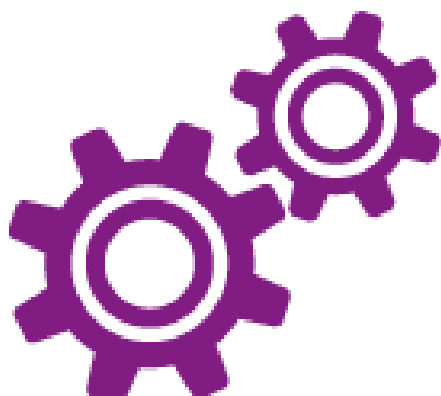


## Dementia Drop In

The Dementia drop-in service is run from our Capstone Dementia centre, and aims to allow families to have the option of a small amount of respite in a flexible way.



## COGS Club



Age UK Medway run maintenance Cognitive Stimulation Therapy sessions (mCST) and COGS Clubs five times a week, which are designed to help those that may be experiencing problems with their memory.

## MCST

Age UK Medway have some exciting news about a new specialist centre which will be located in the Pat Warner Suite in Gillingham. Maintenance Cognitive Stimulation Therapy is our brand new service, which unlike our Dementia centre, is not run by carers but is run by qualified facilitators. MCST is designed for people who are independent, do not necessarily have a Dementia diagnosis but are noticing some issues with their memory and want to actively seek help to stop any further memory loss progressing.

## Contact Us

For further information about any of the above Dementia services call **01634 406058** or email **enquiries@ageukmedway.org.uk**





# Home Care Services

## Homecare Services



Age UK Medway provides a full range of care and support services across Medway, Faversham and Sittingbourne, offering a full range of care including:

- All personal care needs
- Breakfast calls
- Lunch and tea calls
- Assisting to bed
- Medication prompt

We also provide domestic support, including help with cleaning and shopping.

## Flexible Dementia Outreach



This service offers flexible activity based support for people living with dementia or with memory concerns living in their own home, enabling individuals who are experiencing the early stages of a dementia type illness to be supported in continuing to pursue their interests, take part in meaningful activities, maintain their independence and retain or develop social contacts. Referrals can be made by any Health and Social Care Professional, by yourself or family. The service operates 7 days a week, **9:00am to 5:00pm**.

## Foot Care Service



Age UK Medway provides a footcare service for older people - both in the community and at our Day Centre in Gillingham.

The service includes:

- Cutting and filing toe nails, keeping them at a comfortable length
- Smoothing and moisturising dry and rough skin
- Checking for cracks and breaks in the skin, and inflammation such as blisters
- Looking for signs of infection.

We also provide domestic support, including help with cleaning and shopping.

### Contact Us

For any information about the above services:

#### Homecare

**01634 401099** (Medway)

**01795 506490** (Faversham)

## Community Bathing Service



The Community Bathing Service provides the required level of assistance to allow people to have a bath or shower safely in their own home, treating each person as an individual and promoting their dignity and respect.





## Information & Advice



Age UK Medway are delighted to be working with our sister charity Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne, who have extended the catchment area of their Information and Advice service to reach residents of the Medway towns.

The service can help you with:

- Welfare benefit checks/form filling
- Pensions
- Housing issues
- Health and social care
- Gas and electricity bills
- Help with blue badge/disability bus pass applications

And most other things that affect your quality of life.

If we can't help you, we can put you in touch with people who can.

### Contact Us

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne

01795 532766

IAenquiry@ageukfs.org.uk



## Handy Van Service



Our Handy Van service provides customers with a vetted handy person to carry out small jobs that can make a difference to your quality of life. We aim to make it easy for you to remain independent and maintain your home, whilst knowing you will receive a friendly and professional service.

If you would like further information on our Handy Van service, or you would like to make a referral, please call us on 01634 572616.



“ Volunteering has been key for my mental health - when I first joined, the human contact was wonderful, after months of conducting my work and social life through a computer screen. Indeed, the time I spend is pleasant diversion from my desk job. ”

Find out more about volunteering on page 12!

## Charity Shop



"It's like Aladdin's cave!"

Age UK Medway have been operating a charity shop in the heart of Gillingham for over 20 years and is a vital source of income to fund the work of Age UK Medway.

The shop is run by a friendly team of staff and volunteers and is known for its good quality, affordable items – vintage and modern!

All donations are gratefully received, although because of the shops size we are unable to take large items.



## Good Day Calls



Our Good Day Calls service is a daily call, available 365 days a year, to have a chat and check on the welfare of an older person.



Our Good Day Calls service aims to:

- Provide reassurance to family members
- Ensure the person is up and well each day
- Take a friendly interest and share laughs
- Listen carefully for concerns and give support when needed
- Escalate for assistance if we have cause for concern.

### Contact Us

01634 578085  
[gooddaycalls@ageukmedway.org.uk](mailto:gooddaycalls@ageukmedway.org.uk)



## LUNCHTIME SALUTES

12 – 3pm

Running on the second Wednesday of the month, including a two-course lunch, tea/coffee & a live show with a special salute

- 9<sup>th</sup> FEB A SALUTE TO FRANKIE VALLI
- 9<sup>th</sup> MARCH A SALUTE TO 60s HEARTHROBS
- 13<sup>th</sup> APRIL A SALUTE TO 70s DISCO
- 11<sup>th</sup> MAY A SALUTE TO COUNTRY & WESTERN
- 8<sup>th</sup> JUNE A SALUTE TO MERSEYBEAT
- 14<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER A SALUTE TO MOTOWN
- 12<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER A SALUTE TO 60s QUEENS
- 9<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER A SALUTE TO TOM JONES
- 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER A SALUTE TO CHRISTMAS

A2 Shorne, Gravesend, Kent DA12 3HB [www.fcdhotels.co.uk](http://www.fcdhotels.co.uk)  
[events@fcdhotels.co.uk](mailto:events@fcdhotels.co.uk) 01474 823333

## Carers Relief Service



Now part of the Age UK Medway organisation, Carers Relief Service provides support and short breaks for adults with learning disabilities, offering a person-centered approach which provides:

- A flexible service based on the individual's requirements
- Personal Support Workers to work in the community with adults who have a learning disability to relieve the main carer from the pressure of caring.
- Promoting the independence of adults with a learning disability to make choices about the activities they engage in within their community.
- A choice of a sit-in service at home, client-led activities such as bowling, cinema, shopping, etc., day centre clubs or day trips.

### Contact Us

01634 715995  
[CRS@ageukmedway.org.uk](mailto:CRS@ageukmedway.org.uk)



## Membership Scheme



Become a member of Age UK Medway and unlock exciting benefits and offers. Not only will you receive discounts on services at our Day Centres, you can also stop by for lunch and a chat with others and attend organised day trips including transport!

We offer two types of memberships. A full membership unlocks all of the above, and a supporting membership gives access to fewer offers, for example for friends and family that wish to accompany a full member on a day trip.

For an application pack or more information, contact our Membership Administrator:

### Contact Us

**01634 572616**  
**enquiries@ageukmedway.org.uk**



## Sparko Virtual Retirement Community



Sparko TV uses innovative technology to enable older people to connect with the community through their television, and with a simple, easy-to-use remote control. **Sparko is all about creating communities, and supporting the wellbeing of older people, which it achieves in three ways;**

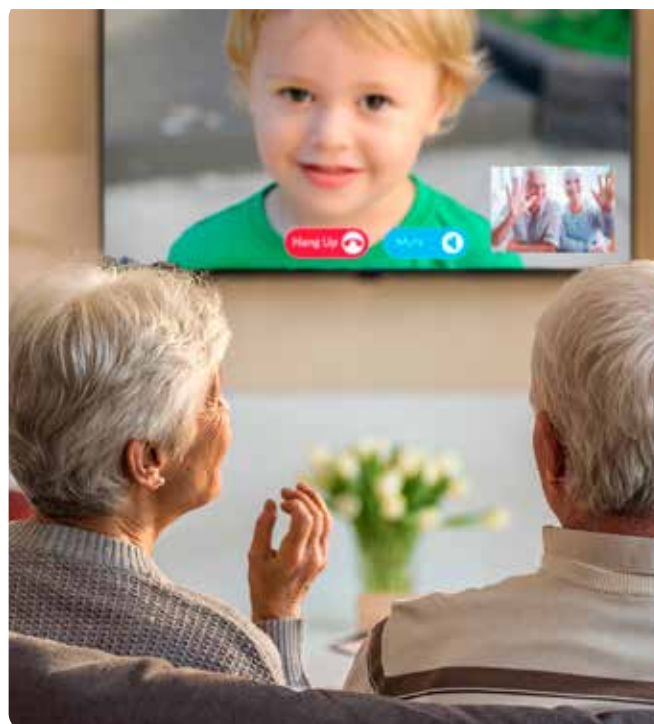
- ❖ Bespoke, exciting content for browsing from lifelong learning and exercise, to entertainment and local history.
- ❖ Connecting with the local community and with Sparko's wider community including coffee mornings, dance classes, creative writing, art classes, exercise sessions, quizzes, live bingo, and so much more.
- ❖ Connecting with family and friends wherever they are in the world, free of charge, and to the comfort of their loved one's home!

### Want to know more?

Whether you are thinking about the possibility of a Sparko box for yourself, or have an older family member or friend in mind, we would be happy to answer any of your questions and begin the process of installing your very own Sparko box in your home

### Contact Us

**01634 578085**  
**sparkotv@ageukmedway.org.uk**



To advertise in the next issue of this publication please contact  
**Laurence**

**Tel: 01536 334218**

**Email:**  
**laurence@lanceprint.co.uk**

## Daily Living Aids



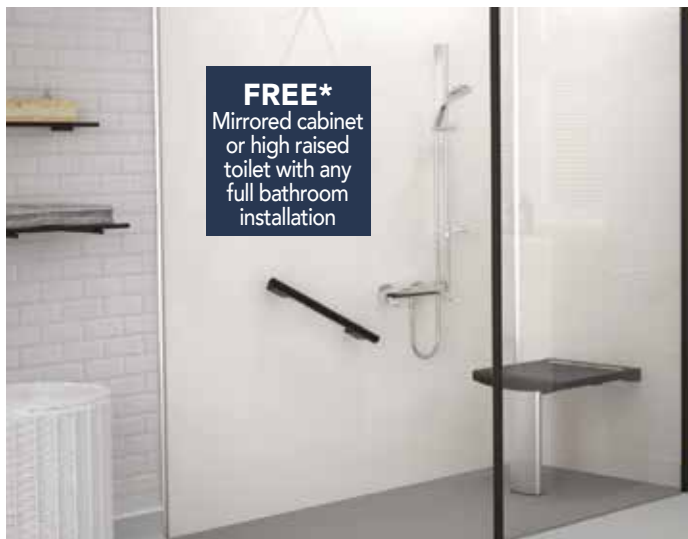
Age UK Medway is pleased to announce it is now an official retailer of the nationwide supplier, Able2, and can provide a complete range of daily living and rehabilitation products. Some of that range is available from our charity shop, but if you would like to discuss a specific need, or request a brochure, please call us on 01634 572616.



## The Welfare Fund



The Welfare Fund has been designed to help those who are under temporary financial hardship access our services, whilst our Information and Advice team help you to gain access to any additional funds that you are entitled to. If you wish to speak to us about our Welfare Fund, and make an application, please call us on 01634 572616 to request an application form. There is no judgement, and applications are welcomed at any time.



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info@ahminstallations.co.uk www.ahminstallations.co.uk

\*Terms and conditions apply, visit our website for more details.

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# PORT LYMPNE & HOWLETTS

HEAD OFFICE  
PORT LYMPNE HOTEL & RESERVE,  
LYMPNE, NR HYTHE, KENT, CT21 4PD

THE HOWLETTS WILD ANIMAL TRUST:  
UK REG COMPANY NO. 471904  
CHARITY NO. 1100845

## Weekends in the Wild

at Port  
Lympne  
Hotel &  
Reserve

If you are looking for the perfect unique short break with family and friends, Port Lympne Hotel & Reserve in Kent offers something for everyone. From a stay in the luxurious 4-star boutique hotel, to treehouses, 180-degree panoramic bubble pods and immersive lodges partially set within lions' and tigers' habitat, guests will enjoy an unforgettable safari staycation.

A range of glamping options are available, from cosy, heated wooden camping pods set amidst pine trees to family safari tents offering views of charming spectacled

bears and uninterrupted vistas all the way to Romney Marsh and the English Channel. Overnight stays include full access to the stunning 600-acre reserve, home to 900 endangered animals, with the chance to journey by truck through a vast Kentish savannah, seeing such iconic favourites as giraffe, black rhino, wildebeest and zebra.

A visit will directly help the park to protect wildlife here in the UK which, in turn, enables the park's partner conservation charity, The Aspinall Foundation, to send animals back to the wild.



To book your weekend in the wild today, visit <https://www.aspinallfoundation.org/port-lympne/> or call **01303 234112**

## Help give endangered animals a future

We face a global extinction crisis. Nearly 10,000 rhinos have been lost in the last decade alone. The population of African savanna elephants has decreased by at least 60% over the last 50 years, according to IUCN assessments. Western lowland gorilla populations continue to plummet through poaching and habitat destruction. These poor animals live in a state of constant persecution.

With humans exploiting and destroying nature on an unprecedented scale, the work of The Aspinall Foundation has never been more important.

Through its overseas projects across three continents, the charity works in some of the world's most fragile environments, engaged in an ongoing mission to combat freefalling wildlife populations. Its global conservation work, spanning

over 35 years, covers issues such as the illegal wildlife trade, the recovery of threatened species and the protection of their habitat through community-based conservation.

With your support, The Aspinall Foundation can continue this critical work.

If we don't act now and play an active role in saving many species, they will be wiped off the face of the earth within years.

As a charity, The Aspinall Foundation relies heavily on the support of others, and your donation can help

fund resources to turn these magnificent animals' fortunes around.



With a donation today. Together, we can bring vulnerable species back from the brink. To act now, please visit : [www.aspinallfoundation.org/donations/](https://www.aspinallfoundation.org/donations/)

# Volunteer Services

*"It doesn't matter if it's pouring with rain, you're still on my doorstep and it's a lovely feeling just knowing that you care."*

## Befriending



Age UK Medway's Befriending Service provides companionship to older people living in Medway who are experiencing loneliness. A fully trained and vetted volunteer will be carefully matched to an older person and spend 1-2 hours a week together, chatting about life and becoming not just a familiar face, but a friend.

The main aims of the service are::

- To reduce social isolation
- To build confidence
- To maintain independence
- To enhance wellbeing
- Assist with engaging with the community.



The Befriending service is a free service that is provided by fully trained and vetted volunteers, whom are carefully matched to ensure that we connect people with similar interests and to create a long-lasting friendship.

### Contact Us

01634 790140

[enquiries@ageukmedway.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageukmedway.org.uk)

### Become a Befriender

Did you know that there are 1.4 million chronically lonely older people living in England? You can help by becoming a Befriender with us:

- ❖ Make a difference to someone's life
- ❖ Give something back to the community
- ❖ Be a part of our volunteer team
- ❖ Do something incredibly rewarding



## Become a Volunteer



Volunteers are vital to our work, we couldn't run our services for older people without their help and kindness—and we always need more volunteers.

At Age UK Medway, we take pride in delivering this invaluable volunteering service to the older people of Medway.

People volunteer for various reasons but most do so because it gives them a great sense of achievement that they have brightened up someone else's day.

*"Volunteering has been key for my mental health - when I first joined, the human contact was wonderful, after months of conducting my work and social life through a computer screen. Indeed, the time I spend is pleasant diversion from my desk job."*

Wendy, Volunteer at Mackenney Centre



No matter the reason behind why you want to volunteer, we have many options for you:

- Day Centre: Assisting older people during their visit and serving snacks/meals
- Minibus Drivers: Pick up and drop off our visitors to and from the Day Centres
- Charity Shop Assistant: Serving customers and carrying out small admin tasks.
- Befrienders: Offering companionship to older people in their homes.
- Meal Delivery Drivers: Delivering freshly prepared meals from our Day Centre to customers' doors.

Could this be you? Call

01634 790140

to speak to our dedicated volunteer team!



# Latest News

## Age UK Medway Lottery

We've launched our very own lottery page with Medway Lottery, meaning that you can be in for the chance to win prizes up to £25,000 all whilst supporting Age UK Medway and the vital work we provide to our local older communities.

Medway Lottery was created in 2021 by Medway Council and was set up to support community projects in the local area. Medway Lottery operates on the principle of raising money within the community, for the community.

A ticket for Medway Lottery costs £1 a week, with a draw every Saturday evening, and 60p will go directly to good causes. Every ticket has a 1 in 50 chance of winning a prize every week! That's better than the National Lottery and the Health Lottery.

50% of all ticket sales will go towards helping us continue to run our incredible services which make a difference to so many people's lives including Befriending, Meal

Deliveries, specialist Dementia care and our popular Social Clubs.



Support us, and win prizes! To purchase a ticket visit [www.medwaylottery.co.uk/support/age-uk-medway](http://www.medwaylottery.co.uk/support/age-uk-medway) Good luck!

## Age UK Medway awarded **Together Fund** via Sport England and Age UK

Back in August, Age UK Medway were one of 62 local Age UK charities to be awarded with the Tackling Inequalities Fund / Together Fund, which was set up by Sport England to acknowledge the impact that a lack of physical activity during the pandemic had on many older people, and provide real support to help turnaround the effects by encouraging physical activity in local older communities.

The grant of £5,469 has, since then, funded a six month programme of activities to help support and improve the health and wellbeing of our Mackenney Centre customers, including 52 hours of Armchair Aerobics, Music for Wellbeing, and Hydrotherapy Swimming.

All activities have been extremely popular with our customers, and the Head of Mainstream Services said that she has seen a real improvement in not only the physical health of the customers, but a noticeable difference in their energy levels and general spirits too.

The Tackling Inequalities / Together Fund was just what our customers needed after a long and enduring pandemic, which still isn't over, to get them up and moving and experiencing new types of exercise together.

Sue Hodges, Head of Mainstream Services, says that even when the programme is over, they will continue to incorporate similar activities into the day centre activities to continue to stimulate our customers both physically and mentally.



## Battle of the High Street 2021



In 2020, our fundraising team created the 'Battle of the High Street' fundraiser event, where we would reach out to each of the high streets in Medway and get their retailers together to compete in a fun and challenging pub quiz style competition! We were due to unveil our first event in 2020, however, due to the pandemic this got postponed to 2021.

Finally, on 22nd September 2021, our first ever Battle of the High Street fundraiser event went ahead, where teams from Chatham High Street retailers Sainsbury's and Specsavers went head-to-head!

Hosted at Travelodge Maritime with wonderful views of the Chatham Docks, our CEO took on a new role as quiz master for the evening, and things got competitive as 'Simply the Best', 'Norfolk n Good' and 'Chatham Main Stars' battled it out for the grand prize of 8 tickets to Madame Tussaud's in London.

Of course, it wasn't all serious as drinks were flowing and laughter was had... but after all, there can only be one winner! After a tense couple of hours, our quiz winners were revealed... and they really were 'Simply the Best'! Congratulations to Sainsbury's; we hope you enjoy your prize of a trip to Madame Tussaud's.

Not all was lost, however, as we believe that the losers deserve something to remember the evening by too, and so 'Chatham Main Stars' from Specsavers were still stars of the evening in a sense, winning the 'loser spoon'.



Our remaining team 'Norfolk n Good' from Specsavers didn't leave the evening empty handed either, as both our Specsavers teams raised the most money for Age UK Medway and so were awarded with tickets to Leeds Castle.

Overall, a great night was had and community spirit was high; not only was Battle of the High Street a great opportunity for these businesses to enjoy a night off together, but it was also a chance for them to do something really rewarding, by fundraising for a local charity which provides support to hundreds of vulnerable older people living in Medway.

We look forward to the second round of Battle of the High Street, where we will be gathering up teams from Rochester high street! If you are a retailer based in Rochester High Street and want to secure your place, get your wits about you and get in touch with us on 01634 578085 or email [enquiries@ageukmedway.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageukmedway.org.uk).

Thank you to Travelodge Maritime for providing a great space for our Battle of the High Street fundraiser event, to our brilliant staff team hosts, and to our competitive guests for a great evening all round.

Also a huge thank you to Madame Tussaud's London and Leeds Castle, Kent for the amazing prizes.

See you in 2022!

*I needed companionship & someone to take me shopping. You sent the very person I needed. Carol, she could have been family!*



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# BIG KNIT update

## Friston House Care Home present Age UK Medway with a generous donation



Friston House Care Home, based in City Way, Rochester, were proud to present a cheque for £839 to Age UK Medway, after winning the Barchester staff lottery. The Care Home's staff decided to let the residents choose what to do with the winnings, and the residents kindly chose to donate the money to Age UK Medway, to support our work in helping Medway's older communities.

**Sandra Verrell**, General Manager at Friston House Care Home, said;

“We are always keen to show as much support as we can to local charities, especially as Age UK Medway is close to the care home's heart. Many of our residents have used their services while they have lived here at Friston House, or when they were in their previous homes in the community.”

**Karen Treacy**, Fundraising Manager at Age UK Medway, said;

“Age UK Medway are honoured to receive this cheque from Friston House. While I was here, I have had a look around the care home, and it is delightful. The staff are lovely and attentive, the home is beautiful and the residents are really happy and well looked after.”

The £839 contribution has gone towards the services we are providing to ensure the physical, mental and emotional needs of the local, older generation are met, which include;

- Meal delivery service, offering freshly cooked meals
- Two specialist Dementia centres
- Flexible Dementia outreach service
- Befriending service
- Plus many more

Age UK Medway look forward to continuing their relationship with Friston House staff and its residents in the future.

The innocent Big Knit campaign for 2021 has so far been a huge success, as we have received dozens and dozens of adorable little knitted hats from so many of you!

This is the 18th year that innocent has been running the Big Knit in partnership with Age UK and woolly warriors are needed again this campaign to craft some little hats to sit on innocent smoothie bottles. For each be-hatted smoothie sold, Age UK receives 25p, which will help the charity make a big difference to the lives of older people.

We want to thank every single person who spent time knitting, crocheting and posting in these little hats, and we hope the activity brought you some joy during the pandemic. We will be able to confirm our grand total in our next edition, but so far we have received a total of 1,490 tiny, little hats!



**John Norley**, our CEO said:

“The money raised from these little hats will make a big difference to the lives of older people in our area, many of whom have been badly affected by the pandemic. Every hat knitted will help to fund our hugely important services, including our exciting new virtual retirement community.”

If you would like to take part, you still have time! The deadline for the little hats to be sent in is June 2022. You can download the patterns online, or we can send them to you! Just visit our website ([www.ageuk.org.uk/medway](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/medway)) or call us on **01634 572616**.

You can send completed hats to Age UK Medway at The Admiral's Offices, The Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TZ.

**Happy knitting!**

# Our ALF Principle

**G**one are the days when community spirit was inherent in most people, and looking out for others, in particular an older person, was part of daily life. No longer will someone chat with a friend, or a stranger, in a supermarket queue whilst waiting to pay for their weekly groceries; nor will an older person queue outside the post office to collect their pension every Tuesday; nor relax in the comfort of their local pub, with a pipe and a pint, and the company of their friendly landlord.

Some people and, most importantly, many of our people, are looking around and wondering where everybody else went. The problem is, does anyone ever stop to wonder where they went?

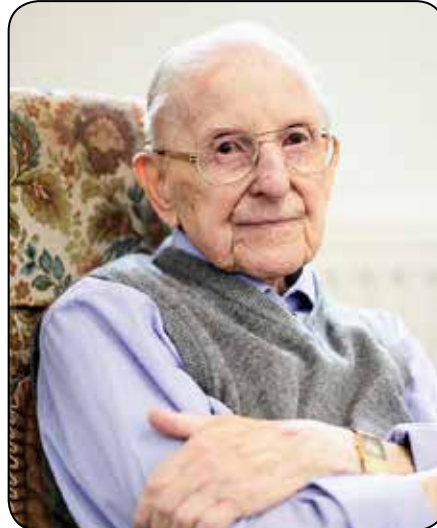
No longer will the milkman wonder why yesterday's milk bottle is still sitting, untouched, on the doorstep. No longer, will the landlady think how odd it is that Mavis hasn't been in for her evening sherry since Tuesday.

No longer does anyone ask now... **where is Alf?**

**At Age UK Medway, we want to change that, and make sure that older people are not forgotten.**

We realise we cannot turn back the tide of time, and there are many reasons we would not want to try. Technology brings many advantages for the older generation. For example, by making it easier than ever before to stay in touch with far-flung family and friends, or by bringing learning opportunities straight into the living room, that might previously have meant a venture out on a cold, wet day.

But nothing can replace the heart-warming value of regular, face to face contact with others who are looking out for you. And that is why we are calling on society to keep an eye out for Alf, and make sure he is okay. If you're popping to the shop, knock on your next-door neighbour and ask



if she needs anything. If you're mowing your lawn, ask the old man across the street if he needs his done.

Or if you have time, you could even ask them if they'd like some company over a cup of tea.

You'd be amazed at some of the stories older people have to tell, and how rewarding it would be for you.

## Achieve Life's Fullness

And what are we at Age UK Medway doing?

**We have embedded the ALF Principle in the charity's DNA, and at every turn will look out for older people like Alf, to make sure they are given the opportunity to Achieve Life's Fullness.**

- In every interaction we have with, or about, an older person, we listen carefully to ensure we can make an informed judgement on the best way, or ways, we can support that individual. Whether it is through a programme of social support delivered by our day services, or a service which allows someone to remain independent and connected in their own home, or even both, we will strive to provide the chance for that person to continue to Achieve Life's Fullness.
- Our recruitment programme selects candidates who 'fit' the ALF Principle, and who we are sure will embody the culture in their daily work.
- The induction training for every new starter includes full immersion into the Principle, providing a clear understanding of what is expected of them.
- Our annual training programme contains refresher guidance on the importance of the ALF ethos as a key component to the way we work as a charity supporting older people.
- Our annual staff supervision and appraisal scheme incorporates recognition of each individual's performance against the expectations set by the ALF Principle.
- Our staff incentive scheme is based entirely around examples of the ALF ethos in practice, ensuring the Principle is enshrined in the charity's culture.

## #AskAboutAlf

**It's more than just a hashtag. It is the public face of Age UK Medway's belief that older people must not be forgotten, and of the responsibility we all have.**



## Community Ambassadors

As part of our **ALF Principle**, where we aim to ensure that every older person is able to Achieve Life's Fullness, we are excited to launch our Community Ambassador programme this year.

Over the course of the next few months, we will be recruiting volunteers who consider themselves active members of society, and they will be the bridge between our charity and the wider community, with the aim of reaching even the most isolated people that may otherwise have been overlooked. Our Community Ambassadors will raise awareness in the communities we serve of the range of Age UK Medway services available to older people and will help to provide access to those services for older people in a simple, effective and supportive manner to allow them to take full advantage of the support available.



### Community Ambassador activities and duties may include:

- Providing conversation and listening
- Offering advice regarding Age UK Medway services
- Being a point of contact between the charity and the potential service user (a gateway to arrange services that support independent living for people in later life)
- Liaising with Age UK Medway to help those in need
- Raising local awareness of the charity's work
- Reducing social isolation
- Promoting long-term health
- Making referrals to Age UK third party partners, for independent living solution products.

Having Community Ambassadors actively working in the community, will mean that we can have eyes and ears everywhere in Medway, helping us to reach the people who aren't able to reach out to us and give them the support they need. Even if we aren't able to help them through our services, we will provide them with the information they need and put them in touch with someone who can help. If you think this could be the perfect volunteering role for you, we would love to hear from you! You can apply today by completing our application form, or for more information about becoming a Community Ambassador, please contact Megan at [meganashdown@ageukmedway.org.uk](mailto:meganashdown@ageukmedway.org.uk) or **01634 572616** for an informal chat.

## Meet our Community Engagement Officer



Meet Megan, our new Community Engagement Officer, who will be coordinating the Community Ambassador project in the Medway towns.

“I'm very excited to get stuck into my new role as Community Engagement Officer at Age UK Medway, where I hope to reach the people we have missed in the past and to be the bridge between people in the community and our head office, in order to make sure no one is left behind or forgotten. In this role I hope to create a new community of established individuals, all working together to help others Achieve Life's Fullness.”

**John Norley**, our Group Chief Executive says:

“We are delighted to be able to welcome Megan into a brand new role in the charity as our Community Engagement Officer. Megan completed an apprenticeship in business administration with Age UK Medway in 2017 and was very keen to return to us, and to take up the new community-focused role.

Megan brings a wealth of knowledge about the charity and all of the services we provide to the role, as well as a real focus on people, and finding the very best ways to engage them in what we are doing; it is a perfect fit. Welcome Megan and best of luck in the new role, we look forward to seeing our Community Ambassador programme grow under your direction.”



## What we've been up to

### Capstone Dementia Centre Christmas dinner!

Our Capstone Dementia Centre kicked off the festive season with a Christmas dinner for the MCST (Maintenance Cognitive Stimulation Therapy) group at the lovely Upchurch Golf Club. Everyone was so excited, as this was their first Christmas meal in two years, due to the pandemic!



### Handmaking Christmas decorations

The Capstone Dementia Centre customers got crafty in December and made these wonderful Christmas tree decorations for the Capstone Farm Country Park, where they were placed on trees around the park for everyone to see! The customers wanted to make the decorations as a thank you, as the Rangers from Capstone Park surprised our centre in November with some special harvest festival hampers, which were filled with donated goodies from local residents and friends of the Park.



### A special visitor

You may remember from our summer edition that our Capstone Dementia Centre had a very special, fluffy, four-legged guest... well, Hugo now has a little sister called Roxie, and she came to say hello to the customers in her festive attire! Spending time with animals can be a source of support and stress relief, and can also encourage social interaction and physical movement - no wonder they call it 'puppy therapy'. Thank you to our Head of Dementia Services, Sylwia, her friend Katie Marshall and of course to little Roxie, for providing all the cuddles!





## The Mackenney Centre Upcycling project

Day Centre customers Mary and Peter worked hard with Carer Lisa, Head of Services Sue and Volunteer Chris in upcycling an unused and broken bathtub, and transforming it into a beautiful water feature for the garden. First, they used old rolls of safety tape to jazz up the look of the old tub, then adding broken slabs, Scottish pebbles and golden gravel to fill it up. Lastly, various succulents and some very pretty gysophelia were planted, with the odd wacky ornament and even a water feature to finish it off. Lisa says;

“it's an odd creation, but a creation that represents Age UK Medway - recycle, rejuvenate with a dash of make do and mend.”



Our Carers Relief Service clients felt it was important to honour all of the animals who lost their lives as victims of war, as well as our fallen soldiers. Each red and purple poppy was hand painted by clients, and the soldier and horse silhouette hand drawn by our CRS Office Administrator, Tatyana.

## Remembrance Day

Remembrance is always a particularly emotional day for many of our customers, many of whom vividly remember World War II, and the pain of losing people close to them during that time.

Our Mackenney Centre customers created a Poppy Tree in November, to pay tribute to their lost loved ones on Remembrance Day by writing a message on a handmade poppy and hanging it from the tree. Our customers also hand knitted dozens of poppies for the Remembrance display board, in honour of our fallen soldiers. Lest We Forget.





## Turkey and Tinsel Weekend

Some of our Mackenney Centre customers kicked off the festive season with their first Turkey and Tinsel weekend away in two years!

There was a turkey dinner, Christmas jumpers, laughing, and dancing aplenty (Betty even finding a male dance partner for the evening). Mary, 86 years old, said: "The food was fantastic, and the staff were absolutely brilliant. It's the first time I've ever done this and I had a brilliant time."

A huge shout out and thank you to our staff members Celia and Diane, who volunteered to take our customers away in their own time. They both said that though it is hard work, it was so worthwhile and they wouldn't hesitate to do it again. This says a lot for the tireless dedication of our amazing staff team. As all of the attendees have been asking - "when can we go again?!"



## Other Rochester Castle Concerts Raffle



Thank you to Rochester Castle Concerts for donating us 4 pairs of tickets to see UB40 and Supporting Acts (including Medway's very own The Petty Thieves), to give away in an exciting raffle over the summer. We were able to raise money to support our work, and award the tickets to Dennis Potter, Elena Wilkins, Brendan Wood and Leanne Bevan!

## A new Ultra Challenger for 2022!

We're delighted to announce our first Ultra Challenger for 2022! Steve will be walking the 100km challenge from London to Brighton in May next year, raising money to help us fund the vital services we provide to local older people. Steve says "there are almost 2 million older people in the UK who suffer with loneliness, and I hope the funds I raise will help Age UK Medway reach out to more of them and help remind them how great life can be."



Please support Steve's Ultra Challenge by visiting: [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/stephen-andrew6](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/stephen-andrew6)

## Reading Well Scheme

The wellbeing of our people is top of our priority list, and this year we've teamed up with Medway Libraries to deliver the Reading Well scheme to our staff and volunteers, whereby books are loaned out for free to support health and well-being.

Whilst it can be hard to find the time to get some reading in, The Reading Agency reported that reading for just 30 minutes a week made people 18% more likely to report high self-esteem and greater life satisfaction.

Our collection of books from Medway Libraries are available in all of our office locations in Medway and Faversham, with a great selection for our staff and volunteers to choose from.







# PORT LYMPNE & HOWLETTS

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**For a Sunday roast with a difference, take a walk on the wild side and head to The Garden Room Restaurant & Bar at Port Lympne Hotel & Reserve.**

Only 15 minutes away from Ashford International Station in the stunning Kent countryside, The Garden Room is nestled within Port Lympne's 600-acre wildlife park, home to 800 animals. Originally the stableyard of Sir Philip Sassoon's country estate, the restaurant offers a relaxed Mediterranean garden-inspired interior, where guests can dine in the same surroundings as Winston Churchill, Charlie Chaplin and many other famous former visitors.

Served 12:30 - 7:30pm every Sunday, roasts include full access to the reserve, which boasts dramatic views of the Kent coastline and 14 acres of tranquil landscaped Italian-style gardens to explore. Celebrating the very best of Kentish produce, dishes include rich ham hock terrine with quail's egg and grilled sourdough, mouth-watering roast sirloin of beef and beautifully tender herb-fed chicken breast.

Delectable desserts range from a traditional warming crumble to a light and fluffy buttermilk waffle with honey-roasted pineapple and coconut sorbet.

For more information or to make a booking, visit [www.aspinallfoundation.org/port-lympne/restaurants](http://www.aspinallfoundation.org/port-lympne/restaurants) or call **01303 234173**

## "Is there a place for us in your will?"

Wildlife across the globe is in a perilous position. Western lowland gorilla populations continue to plummet through poaching and habitat destruction. A rhino is slaughtered for its horn in South Africa every single day.

With humans exploiting and destroying nature on an unprecedented scale, the work of **The Aspinall Foundation** has never been more important.

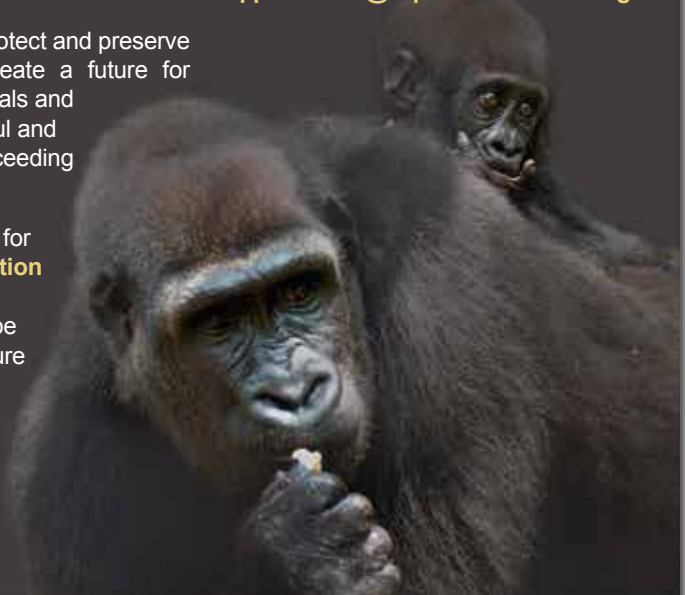
Through its overseas projects across three continents, the charity works in some of the world's most fragile environments, engaged in an ongoing mission to combat freefalling wildlife populations. Its global conservation work, spanning over 35 years, covers issues such as the illegal wildlife trade, the recovery of threatened species and the protection of their habitat through community-based conservation.

A gift in your will is one of the most important ways you can support the work of **The Aspinall Foundation** - a way of expressing your compassionate commitment to conservation.

Your gift will help to protect and preserve the natural world, create a future for these vulnerable animals and safeguard this beautiful and diverse planet for succeeding generations.

If you can find a place for **The Aspinall Foundation** in your will, you'll be leaving a legacy of hope for a future where nature can thrive, free from human persecution.

Visit [www.aspinallfoundation.org](http://www.aspinallfoundation.org) to find out more, or if you would like to talk to someone, contact **01303 234 187** (Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm) or e-mail [supportercare@aspinallfoundation.org](mailto:supportercare@aspinallfoundation.org)



## Our Charity Shop

“One person’s trash, is another person’s treasure”

### Reasons to Shop Second-hand

- ✓ Save money
- ✓ Find rare and unique items
- ✓ Save the planet!

We are passionate about our charity shop because it gives people the opportunity to buy truly unique, one-of-a-kind items for a fraction of the price they would cost brand new, all whilst knowing that every penny they spend goes towards the vital work that we do at Age UK Medway to support our older communities.

But there’s actually another reason we love our shop, and that’s because as a charity shop which relies on donations, we are helping to support the environment by encouraging second-hand shopping too!

It’s no secret that the fast fashion industry is taking its toll on the planet, being responsible for a devastating amount of CO<sup>2</sup> emissions, not to mention the relentless cycle of waste created due to the poor quality of the clothes and the ‘in and out’ fashion trends they follow.

Because of the many ethical and environmental issues around fast fashion, many people are now turning to second-hand shopping as a form of activism, to reduce their carbon footprint and be kinder to the planet, and we at Age UK Medway will be doing our part to raise awareness of all the benefits of second-hand shopping.

We chatted to two of our regular charity shop customers, Chloe and Eliza, to find out why second-hand shopping is important to them and what their top tips are for people new to shopping in this way. Chloe and Eliza both run blogs about their passion for second-hand shopping on Instagram and regularly share their thrifted treasures with their followers.

**Chloe Jayne**, Gravesend



**How often do you shop second-hand?**

I love shopping second-hand and do so frequently, particularly from charity shops.

**What do you like about second-hand shopping?**

Every trip is unique and it is finding those gems that excites me. You can never have a boring trip to a charity shop; there will always be something that catches your eye. I love the fashion aspect of second-hand shopping, especially being able to source my clothing in more sustainable ways; I can create unique outfits that represent me without supporting fast fashion.



Chloe in her ‘Whitney’ t-shirt from Age UK Medway’s shop

**What tips would you give to a new second-hand shopper?**

Always expect the unexpected when you shop second-hand; you can find beautiful vintage items or brand new clothing with tags. Be open-minded and enjoy the search as much as you enjoy the items you find.

**What’s your favourite second-hand item?**

I have lots of clothing that I treasure from charity shops. I love the Age UK Medway shop in Gillingham; I have a cute print t-shirt and lovely summer trousers. They always have great finds in there!



Chloe in her favourite summer trousers from Age UK Medway’s shop. Follow Chloe on Instagram: @chloejaynesclothes

**Eliza Trumpe**, Gillingham



**How often do you shop second-hand?**

95% of the time – I’ve been second-hand shopping for a very long time, so I see it as my main way of shopping, and shopping ‘new’ as a secondary option.





Jeans from Age UK Medway's charity shop

**What do you like about second-hand shopping?**

The list is long, but I personally really enjoy the process; you never know what you will find and the search for me is kind of therapeutic. Obviously it's better for the planet and your wallet too, and when shopping in charity shops I know my money goes towards a good cause.



green handbag from Age UK Medway's charity shop

**What tips would you give to a new second-hand shopper?**

Don't skip – really look at things, and it's never a bad time to check out your local charity shop because one day your gem item is there, and the next it is gone. I incorporate a charity shop visit whenever I run errands and have some extra time. And a very important message – if you do second-hand shopping, tell people about it and encourage others to do so too.

**What's your favourite second-hand item?**

Oh, that's a hard question for someone who really likes clothes, but currently it's a vintage red puffer jacket from the 70s and a striped men's Ralph Lauren shirt I found at the Age UK Medway shop in Gillingham.



Eliza's favourite thrifty item, her Ralph Lauren shirt, from Age UK Medway's charity shop

**Follow Eliza on Instagram: @elizatrumpe**

"Thank you to Chloe and Eliza for chatting to me and showing us their favourite purchases. Their style just goes to show that you don't need to spend a fortune or buy 'new' clothes to put a fabulous outfit together!

It's not just clothes that second-hand shopping is great for either. Charity shops receive all sorts of amazing bric-a-brac as donations and looking through the homeware sections can be so exciting. You can decorate your home with the most unique, amazing quality items that have a history to tell, rather than buying items in the same price range from big stores that tend to be of cheaper quality.

Sometimes, I find something that I didn't even know my home needed... like this green glass vase I picked up for £5 at Age UK Medway's shop.



I also adore my (albeit slightly gaudy) gold palm tree candle stick, which I got from Age UK Medway's shop a couple of years ago for £4; it made my lockdown Christmas dinner table last year a little bit more fun. The crochet place mats were from Age UK Medway's shop too and had never been used; they cost me £2"

Anna Stansell, Editor



Start your second-hand shopping journey and visit our shop:

19 Skinner Street, Gillingham, Kent ME7 1HD



And don't forget to tag us in your finds on social media: @ageukmedway



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# The Lake District Ultra Challenge 12th-13th June 2021

Read all about our Commercial Director, Nick's, incredible 100km (62 mile) Ultra Challenge experience below.

As a child, I was extremely lucky to spend a lot of time walking and climbing in the Lake District with my family. So, when I saw an Ultra Challenge would be taking place on my old stomping ground, it was too good an opportunity to miss!

Travelling up on the Friday with my family, I was nervous in the same way many 'Challengers' often are before these events... "Will my feet cope with the conditions?", "Will my legs get me up the hills?", "Will I be able to keep going when it's pitch black, and I'm on my own?" But, as every Challenger knows, there's only one way to find out, and that's to simply get out and do it!

Starting at 9am on the Saturday morning, it was a beautifully sunny day, and a perfect temperature for walking... not too warm, and with a slight breeze. It wasn't long before I felt at home, following a stony path through the middle of a stunning Lakeland valley, sheep-laden hills rising either side, as a trail of hikers marched through the middle soaking up the atmosphere.

In no time at all though came the first of the steep climbs to tackle, helped by the chance to refuel beforehand at the Old Deer Park rest stop, 12.5km



into the walk. Rising up sharply 140m, and with the temperature increasing, it was the first real test and had many stopping to 'admire the view' several times on the way up! If that wasn't enough to sap the energy, the slightly less steep, but longer 260m of further ascent shortly afterwards certainly brought on the jelly-legs for many!

The undulating gradual descent into Ambleside, with its extra water stop for those suffering from the heat, was a relief by contrast, and the 1st quarter rest point a welcoming sight.

On Ultra Challenge events, the rest stops can be the only things that keep you going! Well stocked with food and drink, they're an essential chance to top up on both, and if you're suffering,

to be patched up by the medical team. I can't speak highly enough of the staff and volunteers who help challengers achieve their goals, many of them working 24-hour shifts until the last participant crosses the finish line. Absolute stars, every last one of them.



After a short break, and with fresh socks on and water topped up, it was time to set off on the next leg, to the half-way point at a YMCA centre on the shores of Lake Windemere. This second section was no less beautiful, meandering through stunning scenery in the countryside west of the lake, through forests, alongside rivers, and past smaller lakes. However, with the heat of the day now at its peak, it was a huge relief when the route turned back towards the shoreline of the lake and the cooler breeze brought some respite. Seeing the boats on the lake, with people jumping in and swimming in the cool water, it doesn't take much imagination to know how tempting it was to join them! I managed to resist though and ploughed on, up another steep climb to the third rest point in the village of Far Sawrey, and onto the 50km halfway point where my wife and children (or the Support Crew, as they were known for the day) waited.



Ultra Challenges... it's about finishing lines, not finishing times.





The night section on challenges always brings an element of the unknown. Firstly, the most unsettling feature is the complete loss of any sense of direction – in the dark, you're unable to see any landmarks you would use during daylight to judge where you are. Your world shrinks to the reach of your head torch... more on that later. The second unknown is how you are going to cope with the tiredness, and the pain you are very possibly going to be experiencing by then. You might have noticed that is two uncertainties and not one, but that is because the two of them often go hand in hand. The more tired you are, the more difficult it is to push through any pain. And the more in pain you are, the more it takes all your energy to keep going. I remember passing at least two people who were stumbling like zombies, fighting so hard to get to the next rest stop, but who, despite their best attempts to sound upbeat, could not disguise the mental and physical pain they were enduring.

And so it was I started into the night, uncertain of what it would bring, but already feeling bruising and potential blisters in some areas on my feet. At about the 64km mark I met up with the man who, as it turned out, would become my walking buddy, and my saviour, to the end of the Challenge. Rick was someone I'd set myself the target of keeping up with during the walk to that point. It hadn't always been possible but having caught him at the halfway point and shared a

meal with him, I knew he would be good company. I wasn't wrong...



You might recall, in the uncertainties I listed above I mentioned the need for a good head torch. Quite simply, you can't do without one, and the organisers will pull you out of the challenge faster than most people refuse your invitation to join you on one in the first place! So, you can imagine my horror when after 73km, and at about midnight, my torch began blinking and then turned off. No longer was I entirely self-sufficient, and after many long months of training, and the huge effort put in on the day so far, I was in the dark, facing the prospect of staying where I was until natural light improved.

Or I would've been if it hadn't been for Rick. Together we walked closely enough for me to share his beam, putting my own torch back on when approaching rest stops, for the brief moments before it would conk out again, so I wouldn't be discovered! Without him, I would've been reliant on a rapidly dying mobile phone, but together we walked until daylight broke at about 4am and I could see for myself once again.

But it wasn't just Rick's head torch that helped me keep going. When he asked if I'd like some music whilst we walked, I agreed it would be a great idea. What he didn't mention was that, along with the music speaker, he'd brought flashing lights! And so, to those residents of the quiet Lakeland villages we passed through in the early hours of the Sunday morning, I can only apologise for the mobile disco!

And that sums up what an Ultra Challenge is often about. Many start out with an individual goal, whether that is to complete the route in a particular time, or simply to reach the finishing line. But, no matter how individual you feel at the outset, you can be certain that'll change. Whether it is the incredible Action Challenge staff and helpers you find along the way, or whether you are lucky enough to find your own Rick, you will never feel alone, and at no stage will you meet anyone who isn't willing you to do the very best you can.

Since completing the challenge, I have read various accounts from other seasoned participants, and many consider it the toughest Ultra Challenge in which they have ever taken part. The last 14km in particular were punishing, an extremely stony path being the last thing the feet needed when they were already bruised and blistered from 90km of walking. But, with determination, and mutual encouragement from my walking buddy, I made it to the finish line and to my fantastic waiting support crew.



**Thanks** to the generosity of everyone who sponsored Nick's Ultra Challenge, he managed to raise a whopping **£1,752** (exceeding his £1,200 target!), which will go towards Age UK Medway's 'Virtual Retirement Community' - a specialist TV-connected platform which provides older people with an easy-to-use way to remain connected with their family and friends, and to help them stay mentally and physically stimulated, at times when they're unable to leave their home.

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