

## Community Grants case studies

### Home Start

A mum with 6 month old multiple birth babies, living in temporary accommodation, was referred to us by an Early Help worker.

The family had recently been housed and were unfamiliar with the area, and struggling to manage in one room accommodation.

We were able to refer the family to another charity for help with baby toys and equipment, and have matched them with a volunteer who visits weekly and offers practical support to the mum to get down the stairs with the babies.

They sometimes go to a coffee shop, and the volunteer has reported an improvement in the babies' social development simply by getting out of the flat. They now look at books and smile and interact with the volunteer and other people. We are trying to enable mum to get the bus to a local group and have been able to loan her a chromebook, as part of our partnership with BT, to help her with her housing application.

### Age UK

Mr L from Sevenoaks lost his wife suddenly last year.

They had both been previously attending my classes together and had started to make some new friends and improve their mobility and Mr L has mobility problems and a heart condition.

I stayed in touch with him over the phone to check on how he was and when he needed help regarding forms and paperwork, I referred him to our Information and Advice Team to help as he was upset, confused and worried about finances as well as grieving for his wife.

We were able to help him and he has since come back to my class which has helped him to start to socialise and talk with other people in the group. He has also since baked cakes for the group as he used to be a baker before he retired.

It is good to see him back interacting, smiling and enjoying the company, after such a difficult time. He has recently started to speaking with another man in the group who has just lost his wife to cancer and good to see the men in the group supporting each other.

The class has helped him mentally and physically in this difficult time.

### Protection Against Stalking

Sarah had been in a relationship with Harry for nearly 8 years. They have 2 children together aged 4 and 6 years. When referred to PAS, Sarah and Harry had been separated for about 4 months.

Sarah reported Harry had been controlling throughout their relationship, always checking where she was and looking through her phone. Harry apparently openly admitted checking her social media and Instagram to make sure she was not contacting any men. Whenever she went out Sarah would need to text Harry frequently to tell him where she was and he would check the accuracy of this when she returned. Eventually she would text him without thinking to keep him happy.

Throughout the relationship Harry would threaten to commit suicide if Sarah spoke about leaving and Sarah always placated him.

Eventually she plucked up the courage to end the relationship, Harry agreed and moved out. Arrangements were made for child contact. Despite being separated Harry would text Sarah

many times each day. If he didn't get a reply within a certain period he would be seen walking past her house to see if her car was there.

A couple of months later Sarah was asleep in her bedroom around 2:30am, her two children were in the bed with her when she became aware of someone crawling along the floor towards her bed, she could see a silhouette in the darkness. She screamed, jumped out of bed and Harry got up saying, "it's me, it's me!"

She continued screaming for him to leave which he eventually did. The impact this had on her mental health cannot be underestimated. It later became clear Harry had been in the property for some time because he questioned her on new clothing she had bought. Harry no longer lived in the property and did not have keys.

Sarah believes she may have inadvertently left the back door open that night, but also believes it wasn't the first time he had tried the doors at night. A friend had told her she had seen Harry around the property at night.

Two months later Sarah got into her car and realised Harry's mobile phone was connected to her car Bluetooth when his music started playing. She panicked again because she realised he must be close.

Sarah eventually got the courage to report what had been happening to her housing association and later to the police who arrested Harry. He admitted his behaviour and is currently on bail.

Sarah was referred to the cyberstalking clinic who worked with her to ensure all her electrical devices were secure and she had the confidence to use them. PAS liaised with KFRS and Victim Support to obtain home security items for Sarah, including motion sensitive lighting and alarm system. The PAS caseworker continues to support Sarah as she waits for the court case and a house move. She has explained the court process and stalking protection orders (SPO). An application for an SPO is now being made. Assistance has been given to support Sarah's application for a house move. Child contact with Harry has now been arranged with Sarah's parents

This case is ongoing, the caseworker is in regular contact with Sarah who is grateful for the support she has received from the Cyber Helpline and PAS.

## **Vintage Convenience Store for patients with Dementia in Sevenoaks Community Hospital Wards**

Sevenoaks Emporium was a day room that was rarely used by patients. The plans were to transform this space into a welcoming place for patients during their stay, somewhere away from the bed spaces where visitors could meet patients and a space that staff could better use to promote wellbeing and rehabilitation, and this is where the transformation began.

Patients living with Dementia would often share that 'when you think of a traditional sweet shop, what comes to mind? Memories of running to your local one after school with pocket money from your parents, hoping to get your favourite sweets, this will reignite your memories, get your taste buds tingling and make the experience truly enjoyable searching for your favourite choices of sweets'

A mural was installed across the outside of the new room, linking it to the existing bus stop along with shop canopies and a flag sign to help people locate it from down the corridor.

A lockable wall-mounted cupboard, with safe polycarbonate doors and sweet jars with bespoke labelling, the old-fashioned serving counter was made safe for use, again by replacing the glass doors and shelving with polycarbonate alternatives and adding a fixed side and a drop-down countertop with additional front to extend the serving counter and prevent patients from accessing behind the counter. The old-fashioned till, weighing sales and a traditional bell were placed on the counter, the jars were filled with sweets and the shop was ready for use.

To complement the Room and add to the experiences for patients, a market barrow was

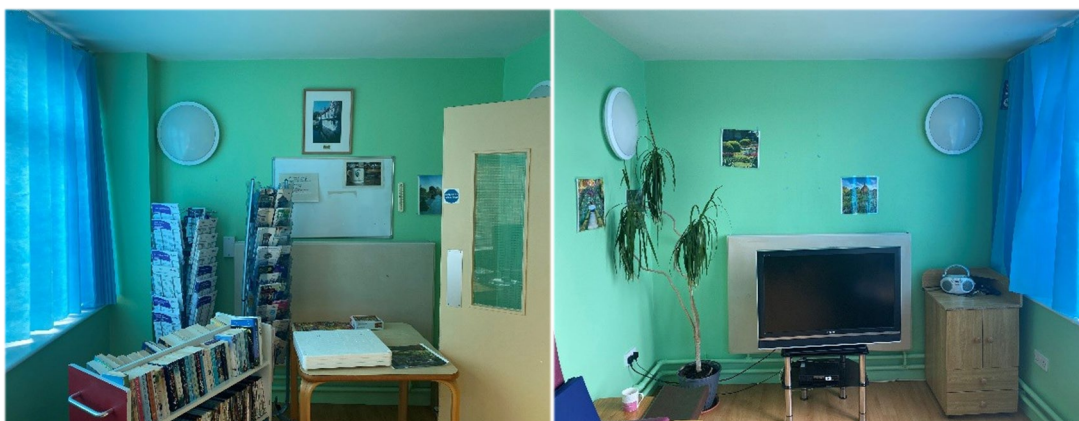
installed and is used as a fruit stall with frit delivered daily from the kitchen for the patients' health and nutrition.

The reminiscence Sensory / rummage Boxes are removable and used for activities at the table when required, most of the time they are on the wall and add interest to the shop. There are 3 boxes, each aimed at men, women and children. The Man containing original 1950's Practical Mechanics magazines, the Woman containing fabrics and materials from silk, wool, velvet, cotton and a Children's container comprising of vintage antique toys. Along with a smaller bookcase and shelf over the existing radiator, having original tins, boxes and memorabilia to promote a Convenience Store feel, this area has been transformed into a brilliant interactive space suitable for everyone

There is also a Record Player and a selection of Records, all donated and also memorabilia of books, newspapers and ration books to add to the vintage theme.

Dementia Software is shown on the TV called Ad-Memoire, accessing thousands of original show reels and adverts with added activities and promotes interaction and engagement.

Before photos



After photos





Kim, the Therapeutic Worker and Sharon, the Dementia Link Worker have patients in the room everyday watching old original Show reels from the Ad-Memoire Dementia Software, listening to Music on the Vintage Record Player, providing sweets to patients, following a detailed Risk Assessment.

They also promote sensory stimulation, purposeful activity and reminiscence Therapy to all the patients living with Dementia or an un-diagnosed Dementia.

It is regularly used by staff, volunteers, relatives, families and Children too, with donations for the sweets returning to the League of Friends.

The room is also used by the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust for their patients who have experienced a Stroke and are at Sevenoaks Community Hospital for their Stroke Rehabilitation Pathway, and Family Meetings.



Left to right – Kim (Therapeutic Worker), Jennifer, Pat, Grahame (Specialist Nurse for Dementia) and Jeanette

Consent obtained from the patients for this report

The above patients, who all live in the Borough of Sevenoaks, have developed a close friendship from meeting in the Emporium, having meals and afternoon tea and cakes in there. They have thoroughly enjoyed being in this room, also tasting the sweets and enjoying the reminiscence materials, sharing stories and nostalgia. This room and facility have helped their mental health and well-being and also enabled them to befriend each other and also, they have continued their friendship upon discharge home.

The Sevenoaks Emporium has been and will continue to be a great success. With the Sweet Shop offering sweets with the nostalgic smell, tastes and texture which are a sensory stimulation and provides reminiscence and nostalgia for the patients with dementia and also for the Stroke patients there. The Sevenoaks Emporium will allow patients, their visitors and relatives and grandchildren to also sit at and share their wonderful vintage stories of sweets and confectionary.

## Sevenoaks Counselling

Henry is a 14-year-old young man who was struggling with anxiety particularly at school.

He had a diagnosis of Asperger's and found unfamiliar situations particularly difficult. His school attendance had fallen, and he was having angry outbursts at home.

He had already received 6 sessions of counselling at school which he found helpful, and he wanted to have more sessions to work on the roots of his anxiety and strategies to cope with difficult situations.

He attended regularly for several months working to identify the situations he found particularly difficult and to develop strategies to manage these. He found having open-ended counselling very helpful and said while the counselling at school had been helpful, not having the pressure of a limited number of sessions meant that he was more relaxed in sessions than with the set number of sessions at school. Over time he began to recognise early signs he was feeling agitated, to identify common triggers for this and to better manage his anger. He began to develop self-soothing skills and to manage his anxiety particularly around attending school.

When his counselling ended both Henry and his mum reported that he was more willing to attend school, that his levels of anxiety were significantly lower and that he felt better able to cope with stressful situations. The angry outbursts at home were infrequent and he felt his relationship with his older sibling had improved.

## Swanley Scouts

Swanley Scouts applied for a grant for the first time in 2022 and received £2,916.25 for adventurous activities and trips

This money allowed the Scout leaders to offer a wide range of activities to young people that included hiring a swimming pool for a swimming badge session, a trip to Chatham dockyards, helping Explorer Scouts attend the week-long Kent International Jamboree and lots more!

Many families in the area would not be able to afford these trips if it wasn't for the grant funding.

Trustee of Swanley Scouts, Frances Wallace adds: "Thank you so much for helping us offer these activities to local children. They were thoroughly enjoyed and gave our members a chance to try new things and learn skills for life. It also had a huge positive impact on the wellbeing, achievement, confidence and resilience for hundreds of young people and their families."

