

# Sutton-on Sea Case Study 2021



**Sandra and her husband Ken moved to Sutton on Sea about 5 years ago from Buckinghamshire.**

The house they moved into required a lot of work, so they spent many years working on the house together rather than going out. Sandra is an artist and most of her work is completed at home. With the house renovations this meant she never got out much.

Ken walked the dogs and started to see the same people each day and managed to build up a bit of a rapport with them. However with mainly being at home, Sandra didn't experience any of this.

Sadly in September 2019 Ken suddenly passed away and left her on her own and isolated. Due to the way they had lived, Sandra said she hadn't made any friends in Sutton. They had left friends behind when leaving Buckinghamshire but since arriving in Sutton hadn't established any real connections.

Sandra explained that she didn't really have any family around her either as her daughter tended to work abroad for long periods. After her husband passed away one of the people he saw on his walks made it her goal to contact Sandra and see how she was.

This lady was called Jane and they both soon became friends. Jane was a big encouragement to Sandra and gradually helped her to come out of the house.



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Being an artist Sandra would often take herself to the sea front and watch the sea/surf to get inspiration for her next piece of work.

She continued to go to the sea front after her husband passed away but more often very early in the morning when no one was about much. She explained *"I could watch the sea and let out my emotions much more easily."* But she also noted *"that was me being alone and isolated again."*

Sandra told me that she had become very isolated in Sutton, but it didn't register with her until her husband passed away. She said, *"I had virtually no one in Sutton apart from Jane and now I have these other people at Fitness, Food and Friends who I see each week."* Sandra has described the Fitness, Food and Friends (FFF) sessions as "a life-line".

However, when Jane first suggested to Sandra about them going together to FFF they were both quite apprehensive about what it would be like. Sandra was anxious about being in a social situation and how she would cope, but coming along to FFF each week has been such a good boost for her. She said that she has interacted with many of the people in the group and her confidence has grown too. She said people in the group have been really kind to her and it has really helped her feel less isolated.

Sandra and Jane are both very pleased that they made the decision to come to the group, as they have learnt so much from it. They have also met up during the week to complete some of the exercise band work.

*"Without the FFF sessions I would have been much more isolated, and my levels of stress and anxiety would have been much higher"* said Sandra.

*"The thought of the sessions coming to an end after 12 weeks made me feel quite anxious and panicky"*. However, Erica (Magna Vitae) spoke to Janna from 'Do-dance' who were planning on setting up an exercise group in the area of Sutton on Sea. Janna came to the FFF session and spoke to everyone about carrying on with the exercise sessions and if people would be interested.



## During Lockdown

Sandra continued to come along to the FFF group in Sutton on Sea until the Covid-19 lock down in March 2020. She enjoyed coming along to the sessions and it had been her first proper social occasion she had regularly attended since her husband passed away in 2019.

Of all the participants we have been able to support through the lock downs, Sandra has certainly struggled more than many.



I recently saw Sandra when I went to pass the community scrap book on to her that was making its way round the FFF participants. She sounded much more positive and looked much brighter during the meeting too. She explained how the FFF group had been such an important group to her and that the wellbeing calls had kept her going through some of the darker times. The goody bag drops had been a real boost to her.

She had found things improved a bit last summer when there was some unlocking of venues and she was able to attend some art groups again. However, this was short lived with the lock downs after Christmas which she said was a challenge.

Sandra also told me she has also met someone new and feels very positive about their relationship and the future! I knew she was very artistic, and this was reflected in some of the amazing drawings she completed in the community scrapbook as well as a positive story she wrote. She told me the scrapbook idea had really helped her both to read other peoples stories but also to add her own.

Shared by Magna Vitae (as part of the Fitness, Food and Friends Project)



# About East Lindsey



## T.E.D.

Ageing Better  
in East Lindsey

East Lindsey is a large, sparsely populated district within the county of Lincolnshire, which includes the popular coastal seaside towns of Skegness and Mablethorpe.

East Lindsey has a higher than average ageing population with 29% of people aged 65 and over. High numbers of older people move to East Lindsey in their retirement years and many have multiple chronic health conditions and few social and familial connections in the region. Public transport across East Lindsey is poor and therefore accessing services can be challenging, especially for older adults.

The overarching aims of the TED Programme are to:

- Reduce social isolation and loneliness
- Help older people to become better connected with volunteering, social, leisure and health improving activities
- Provide opportunities for older people to influence the design, delivery and evaluation of both the services and businesses available to them

We currently have over 1800 registered TED members, and over 100 businesses across East Lindsey hold an Age-friendly Business Award.

### Further information...

To find out more about TED or to get involved visit our website [www.tedineastlindsey.co.uk](http://www.tedineastlindsey.co.uk) or start a conversation and share your views online: Twitter: [@ted\\_EastLindsey](https://twitter.com/ted_EastLindsey)



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