Essence Service

Sunderland ageUK Let's change how we age

ESSENCE ACTIVITIES

AutumnWinter 2026

Just a reminder that Essence Phase 1 support is for people with early to moderate stage dementia only **who are not in full time care**. If someone goes into full time care or their dementia progresses into the moderate to later stages then they will no longer be able to attend our groups and activities. This also applies to their carers. For carers at this point Essence offers a Phase 2 service which is provided by our Essence Carer Navigator and they offer ongoing support for carers only including 2 carer peer support groups. If you have any concerns or queries please feel free to speak to a member of staff.

A quiet waiting room at Sunderland Royal Hospital Accident & Emergency Department has been created for people with dementia and their carers. With thanks to the carers who access the Essence Service, South Tyneside & Sunderland Foundation Trust (ST&SFT) and Healthwatch who came together to make this happen.

A dedicated, quiet space for dementia patients and their carer's to wait in the Accident & Emergency Department. It has comfortable seating, is beautifully and calmly decorated, and has a cabinet filled with games and books to keep people occupied and distracted while they wait. It has dedicated male and female toilet facilities, keys will be issued upon arrival at the Triage desk where you will also have access to a trolley containing incontinence products, should these be required.

ACTIVITIES AT THE ESSENCE CENTRE, DOXFORD PARK

PHASE 1 CLIENT & CARER		
DAY	**MORNING**	**AFTERNOON**
MONDAY	10am – 11.30am The Crafty Club	12 noon – 1pm Chair Benders/Seated Yoga Living Well with Dementia (Dementia awareness course) Please call for more information
TUESDAY	10am – 12 noon Tuesday Men's Group Lady Carer's Corner	2pm – 3.30pm Tuesday Singers incorporating 'Music for the Mind'
WEDNESDAY		2pm – 3.45pm Gentlemen Carers Lovely Ladies Group
THURSDAY	10am – 11.30am Thursday Coffee Morning	2pm – 4pm Indoor Curling
FRIDAY	10am – 12 noon Music & Memories	

ESSENCE ACTIVITIES IN LOCAL COMMUNITY VENUES

PHASE 1 CLIENT & CARER		
DAY	**TIME & ACTIVITY**	**VENUE**
MONDAY	2pm – 3.30pm Community Group	The Avenue Pub Roker SR6 0EQ
TUESDAY	2pm – 3.30pm Community Group	The Holiday Inn City Centre, Sunderland SR1 3DS
WEDNESDAY	2pm – 3.30pm Community Group	Biddick Arts Centre Washington NE38 8AB

ESSENCE PHASE 2 – CARERS ACTIVITIES		
DAY	**TIME & ACTIVITY**	**VENUE**
TUESDAY	**2pm – 4pm Carer's Peer Support Group**	**Millennium Centre, The Oval, Concord, Washington NE37 2QD**
THURSDAY	**2pm - 4pm Phase 2 Carers**	**The Avenue Pub, Roker SR6 0EQ**

TRY SOMETHING NEW

Are you crafty??? Come and join us at the Essence Service on a Monday 10am-11.30am for a mixture of arts and crafts for all abilities.

Some of our latest creations

For all of the above activities you can contact us on:

0191 522 1310

or email us:

essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk

Autumn Poem to Share

Leaves

by Elsie N. Brady

How silently they tumble down
And come to rest upon the ground
To lay a carpet, rich and rare,
Beneath the trees without a care,
Content to sleep, their work well done,
Colors gleaming in the sun.

At other times, they wildly fly
Until they nearly reach the sky.
Twisting, turning through the air
Till all the trees stand stark and bare.
Exhausted, drop to earth below
To wait, like children, for the snow.

Autumn is a gentle reminder
that changes can be beautiful

Recipe of the Month

Make this super easy, warm, and creamy **One-Pot Butternut Squash and Bacon Soup** in just 30 minutes for a cosy autumn meal.

Ingredients

- 1 medium butternut squash (peeled and cubed)
- 1 chopped onion
- 2 minced garlic cloves
- 100g bacon lardons
- 700ml vegetable or chicken stock
- 100ml double cream
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Crisp the bacon: Fry the bacon lardons in a large pot on medium heat until crispy. Remove half for the topping.
2. Sauté the veg: Add the chopped onion and garlic to the remaining bacon fat. Cook for 5 minutes until soft.
3. Simmer: Add the cubed butternut squash and pour in the stock. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 15 minutes until the squash is soft.
4. Blend: Blend the soup with a hand blender until smooth and creamy.
5. Serve: Stir in the double cream, heat gently, and top with the reserved crispy bacon.

Enjoy!

Further Information…….

Please could you share this with your friends and family!

Active Sunderland Walk-To-Fitness Sessions

A FREE weekly Walk to Fitness session takes place in Barley Mow Park, Hendon.

Activities include walking, light stretching, and some simple exercises aimed at building up muscle strength and improving your flexibility and movement. The session is adapted to meet your needs, whatever your ability.

Sessions are free to attend but please sign up using this link -
https://forms.office.com/e/d0WuAEDThg

Where are the sessions being held?
Barley Mow Park, Ryhope Road, SR2 7ST - meet at the tennis courts.

When are the sessions taking place?
Every Tuesday morning at 10am.

How long will they last?
Sessions last for 1 hour, but you can come and do 5, 10 or 30 minutes, it's up to you!

Who are the sessions for?
The sessions are suitable for anyone, but they are aimed at people who haven't been active for a while, or who are looking to start their fitness journey.

What do I need to wear?
The sessions are outside, so wear whatever you have that's suitable for exercise and you feel comfortable in, but footwear should be flat and suitable for walking.

Should I bring anything?
We'd recommend bringing a full water bottle.

Chair Benders

Seated Yoga at the Arts Centre Washington

From www.goodrx.com

Seated Yoga

Please join us for a gentle and achievable experience. Enjoy the benefits of yogic practice from the safety and comfort of a sturdy and supportive chair.

Monday's

12pm-1pm

Essence Centre

Benefits of Seated Yoga

Improved Flexibility
Flexibility helps with your balance and range of motion, and can protect you from injuries

Greater Strength
Stronger muscles protects bone health, lower risk of chronic diseases, boost brain function, and support independent living.

Stress Reduction
Reduced heart rates and blood pressure can be appreciated, not to mention better sleep and executive functioning.

Increased Energy
Shake that chronic exhaustion with body-beneficial activities and find more joy in your day-to-day living.

Social Engagement
A healthy and varied social network can greatly improve ones longevity and happiness.

Pain Management
The cumulative benefits listed above can help alleviate not only the physical symptoms but also reduce the mental and emotional burdens associated with living in constant discomfort.

Metcalfe Dementia Support Service

Sunderland age UK

Our Metcalfe Dementia Support Service is a chargeable service available Monday to Friday 10 am–3 pm.

It is available for individuals with moderate dementia who live within the boundaries of the City of Sunderland.

What support is available - You/your loved one will be welcomed into our newly furbished dementia support facility by experienced trained staff. You/your loved one will receive a hot drink/biscuit on arrival and a freshly cooked meal including a dessert at lunchtime. You/your loved one can participate in a wide range of activities designed to improve the wellbeing of those living with dementia. You/your loved one will have support tailored to your/their needs.

Eligibility criteria - Aged 50+ Living with moderate dementia. Either able to take care of your own personal care needs or require minimum support. Living within the boundaries of the City of Sunderland. The service can be accessed following an initial "assessment" subject to service capacity. Transport with escort is available if required subject to availability.

Outcomes for you/your loved one - Stimulating tailored activities for those living with dementia. Dedicated respite support for carers. A fun day out.

Sunderland age UK
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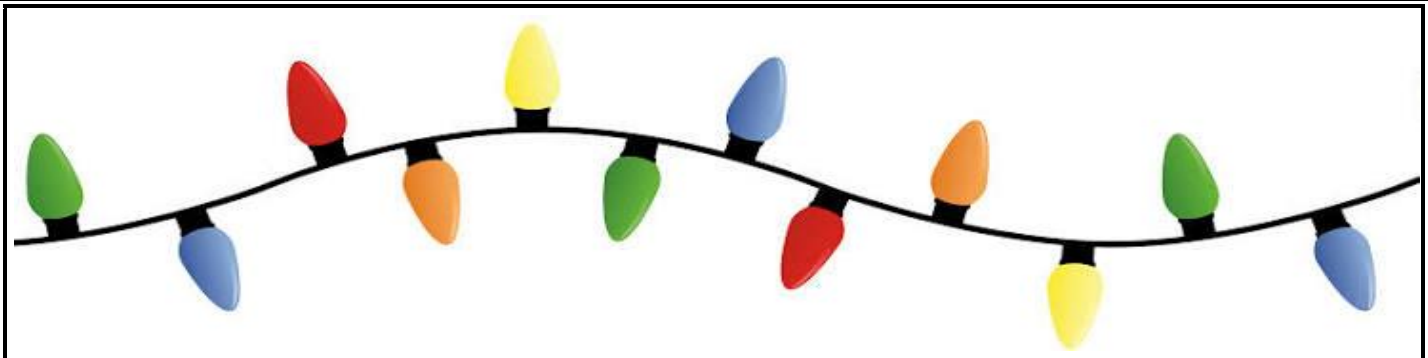
Redwood Day Service

The Redwood Day Service is a chargeable service available Monday to Friday 10am–2.30pm. It is available for individuals aged 50+ who live within the boundaries of the City of Sunderland.

Free taster sessions available

Please contact us for more information



Christmas Closing Dates and New Year Re-Opening Dates:

The Essence Service will close for Christmas on:

Thursday 24th December 2026 at 12.30pm

All activities will finish on:

Friday 18th December 2026

The Essence service will reopen on:

Monday 4th January 2027

All activities will recommence on:

Monday 4th January 2027

It's "Christmas Jumper Week" starting

Monday 13th until Friday 18th December 2026

We'd love to see all our clients in their Christmas attire!

ESSENCE CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Grand Hotel, Seaburn, Sunderland

Wednesday 9th December 2026 12pm-4pm

TICKETS WILL GO ON SALE MID OCTOBER

IN ADVANCE,

WE WOULD LIKE TO WISH YOU ALL A VERY

FROM EVERYONE AT THE ESSENCE SERVICE

Autumn Word Search

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

Find these autumn words:

apple
brown
chilly
cold
corn
country
crops
fall
farmer
fruit
grain
harvest hay
leaf
leaves
maple
migrate
November
October
orange
pear
pumpkin
red
Yellow
scarecrow
September
sweater
vegetables
yellow

DEMENTIA SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE COMMUNITY & OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

Age UK Sunderland Metcalfe Dementia Support Service – 0191 526 9274

Age UK Sunderland Redwood Day Service – 0191 514 1131

North East Dementia Care - 07585 381336

Action on Dementia Sunderland – 07740 111 182

Alzheimer's Society (National) - 0330 333 0804

Initial Response Service (IRS) – 0303 123 1145. To access the IRS (formerly the Crisis team) 24/7 or to make a referral to access the Older Persons Mental Health Team. This can be used to obtain a dementia / medication review in future with a Consultant / Community Psychiatric Nurse.

Sunderland Adult Care – 0191 5205552. To access a care needs assessment. This could be used in future to make contact with the social work team should any help be needed, e.g., for personal care, meals, medication, etc. Alternatively, using the same number you can refer in for any aids or equipment you may need.

Healthwatch Sunderland – 0191 5147145. An independent watchdog service for any issues relating to health & social care services in Sunderland.

Sunderland Carers Centre – 0191 5493768. Providing support for people who look after others. Offering information, advice and guidance to carers in and around Sunderland.

ESSENCE CONTACT DETAILS

Main Reception - Tel - 0191 5221310

Email – essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk

Website – https://essenceservice.org.uk

Twitter - https://twitter.com/EssenceService

Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/Essence-Service-Sunderland1824116444497695/

Post - Essence Service, Sir Thomas Allen Centre, Mill Hill Road, Doxford Park, Sunderland, SR3 2ND

If you would like to attend any of the activities mentioned in this newsletter or require more information about our services please get in touch with us.

The Essence Service strives to improve and expand the current range of activities, available to our clients, and would greatly appreciate any new ideas you may have, which could be of benefit or interest to others.

To share your ideas, please contact your support worker, our office, or email us at essenceactivity@ageuksunderland.org.uk

Data Protection

The Essence Service currently holds your contact details in a mailing list to send you information, such as this monthly Activities & Events information sheet, the quarterly newsletter etc.

In order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation, we need your ongoing consent to continue holding this information so we can still contact you in this way to continue to provide support to you via the Essence Service.

If you would like to request removal from our mailing list, please contact us on:

0191 522 1310

or email us at: essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk

Essence Service

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Living Well with Dementia - Dementia Awareness Training
New upcoming dates for 2026 and 2027

Please contact the Essence Service if you would like more information or if you would like to reserve your place.

A service provided by the Samaritans

'Talk it through!'

This service provides you with an opportunity to talk through matters of concern.

If you would like to talk to someone in confidence, or you would like to know more about the Samaritans service please call:

The Essence Centre on: 0191 522 1310 or The Bradbury Centre on: 0191 51411