

COMMUNITY PROJECTS REPORT – FIONA PALMER

July 2026

Age Friendly Faversham (incl. Dementia, Loneliness)

-We have now closed the Community Survey and gone through the results together within our Age Friendly Steering Group. The next step is to create an action plan which the council can work on over the next 2-3 years. I feel it would be beneficial to have some, if not all of the councillors from the Community Committee involved to help align the actions with the council's priorities.

-To create the actions, we are going to hold a whole morning Action Plan Workshop, where we will have 4 tables of people looking at the results and coming up with some proposed actions. I have outlined the proposed areas below, perhaps you might like to opt for a particular table that aligns with your areas of interest:

Table 1 - 1. Outdoor spaces and buildings & 2. Transport

Table 2 - 6. Civic participation and employment & 7. Communication and information

Table 3 - 4. Social participation & 5. Respect and social inclusion

Table 4 - 3. Housing & 8. Community support and health services

-At this stage I am asking everyone to let me know their availability via this poll:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=dAsvvsUDvEipvVMFNqYC26NGwLzeVLxAlaKKto58Q1IUMDFXWTU2TDMwT1JONzBEWEtaMzNXNEE3MC4u&loop=1> If you are able to come along, please let me know via the poll or send me an email expressing your interest in a particular table.

-Involve Kent have now launched the Ambassador Programme to find volunteers who can support older residents. I have shared details on our Facebook page for residents to sign up. Involve Kent have asked if they can use our Meeting Room or Exhibition Space to meet with potential volunteers.

Armed Forces in Faversham

-Cllr Charles Gibson, our Armed Forces Champion attended the Awards Ceremony in Portsmouth on 1st July to receive the Silver Award for the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. A post was added to our website and Facebook page to promote this. <https://favershamtowncouncil.gov.uk/silver-employer-award/>

-Councillors have now ratified the 'Armed Forces and Reservist Employment Policy' and the 'Faversham Town Council Handbook'. As requested, I have emailed the policy to South East Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association (SERFCA) for their approval.

-Ongoing actions are to maintain the promotion of the Armed Forces in Faversham through our town events and sharing information about what different groups are doing on our website and social media.

-Claire Elliott and I are in the process of putting together the evidence of eligible expenditure from the 'Faversham in the Forties Celebrates Armed Forces Day' event, to claim the money from the grant we were provisionally awarded.

Faversham Charters and Magna Carta

-We sold merchandise at the Pirate Festival for the first time, as a practise run for the Medieval and Tudor Festival later in the year. We made £25 after VAT and fees. Free children's activity leaflets were given out to engage with the public.

-We held a joint event with the QE Grammar School to mark the 450th anniversary of the Queen Elizabeth Charter being granted. Tickets were sold via Eventbrite and a total of £200 was raised after fees. Faversham Charters will receive £50 and £150 will go to the school.

-It might be worth considering holding quarterly talks to engage with the community and to raise further funds for the Faversham Charters solely, once the Guildhall works are completed.

-The online shop uses a Royal Mail plugin to calculate postage. This is due for renewal in August. At this stage I need to investigate cheaper options for selling merchandise, to enable a larger return on investment.

-Our exhibition needs another valuation, as the last one was completed in 2021. Insurance companies advised this should be redone before our next insurance is due in May 2027. I am currently gathering quotes.

-Ongoing work is to support the volunteers, prepare their rota, monitor the humidity in the exhibition room, collate visitor numbers, monitor merchandise stock sold in the Visitor Information Centre, work with school groups, and to create social media/ blog posts.

Faversham Community Networking Group (FCNG)

-During the meeting on 3rd July, Swale Community & Voluntary Services (SCVS) conducted a consultation with members to find out what issues they are facing, what support might be provided, and what areas need to be developed. The overwhelming response was that finding and retaining volunteers is difficult; and finding funding is becoming increasingly problematic. Both these issues can cause divide amongst groups, rather than them supporting each other.

-We discussed the lack of engagement within the group and how we can increase attendance at the meetings. We may try and allow members to join the meetings via TEAMS or occasionally hold just TEAMS meetings. This needs to be discussed further with core members.

-I met with members of the Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise (VCSE) group, who sit above the separate community groups in Faversham, Sittingbourne and Sheppey. Sheppey works slightly differently because they invite members of the community and local businesses along to their meetings, so their needs are different. Sittingbourne and Faversham both run groups made up of Community Groups. Therefore, Sittingbourne Networking Group (SNG) and FCNG are going to work together to create themes for presentations and to share speakers across both groups.

-The z-fold leaflets have arrived from the printer and are currently available for FCNG members to collect for distribution to members of the public.

-The Family Food Map will hopefully be going out to schools this week. I am waiting on Lavinia from Umbrella to complete the design.

-Ongoing work is to find new presenters for the meetings, to organise venues whilst the Guildhall is out of use, to prepare the agenda and powerpoint for meetings, to write up and send out meeting minutes, and to pass on any information that is sent in to other members via email and the Facebook page.

-The Chatty Table for Loneliness Week went well. It was a very hot week, so there were not as many visitors as hoped, but those that did engage found it helpful.

Chatty Table Survey Results

24 people completed a survey. 19 people stopped because they walked by. 4 people found out via volunteers/ posters.

Are there any gaps within the community: children's activity group; befriending those that live alone (2 requests); knitting group; craft group; youth club for teenagers; drop-in activities rather than those you book; more community wardens; dementia friendly spaces and activities (for gentlemen); youth.

Are FCNG advertising charities and organisations effectively: 9 yes, 5 no, 10 did not answer

How helpful was the Chatty Table, where 1 is not helpful and 10 is very helpful: 1 chose 7, 2 chose 8 2 chose 9, 12 chose 10.

I feel it is easy to get the right help and support in the community, where 1 is not helpful and 10 is very helpful: 2 chose 5, 2 chose 6, 1 chose 7, 2 chose 8, 6 chose 9, 7 chose 10.

Do you feel there should be more like this in the community: 19 said yes.

Would like to see: Information in different languages; more advertising; more in different wards; more stalls in the market and on Facebook; secondary schools getting involved; more for youth; more information about volunteering opportunities; more for older people; more stops for the community bus; a volunteering event; better accessibility around the town; more activities; children's groups.

-The next meeting is on 6th August at The Guildhall.

-There will be speakers from 'Funding for All' and 'Strikeforce Football'. There will also be a discussion about the Christmas Dinner for those alone at Christmas.

-I need to complete some website training to help me develop the community pages for all projects.