DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

Resources to help create dementia friendly communities in Shropshire
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WHAT IS DEMENTIA?

The word dementia describes a set of symptoms that may include memory loss and difficulties with thinking, problem-solving or language. These changes are often small to start with, but for someone with dementia they have become severe enough to affect daily life.¹

Dementia is caused by a number of diseases that affect the brain. The most common is Alzheimer’s but other types also include vascular dementia, dementia with Lewy bodies and Pick’s disease.

Different types of dementia affect the brain at different rates and in different ways – the condition progresses in a way that is unique to each individual.

For more information about dementia, please visit the following link:

www.alzheimers.org.uk/aboutdementia

Five things you need to know about dementia:²

1. Dementia is not a natural part of the ageing process
2. Dementia is caused by diseases of the brain
3. It is not just about losing your memory
4. It is possible to live well with it
5. There is more to the person than the dementia
Dementia currently affects around 800,000 people in the UK but is predicted to increase to one million by 2021. **One in three over 65 people will develop dementia.**

Shropshire’s population is growing and it is getting older. Between 2001 and 2011 the Shropshire population aged over 65 grew by 23.8% to 63,400. There are currently estimated to be 4,800 people with dementia, aged over 65 in Shropshire. By the end of the decade this figure will stand close to 6,000.

As our population ages, more and more of us will know someone who has dementia. Whether they are our family, our friends, our neighbours, or even our customers, we will all meet people with the condition in our day-to-day life.

Source: [http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/infographic](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/infographic)
A dementia friendly community is one that shows a high level of public awareness and understanding so that people with dementia and their carers are encouraged to seek help and are supported by their community. Such communities are more inclusive of people with dementia, and improve their ability to remain independent and have choice and control over their lives.

To achieve this, there are 10 key areas that dementia-friendly communities can work towards:

1. **Involvement of people with dementia**
   Shape communities around the needs and aspirations of people living with dementia alongside the views of their carers. Each community will have its own diverse populations and focus must include understanding demographic variation, the needs of people with dementia from seldom heard communities, and the impact of the geography, e.g. rural versus urban locations.

2. **Challenge stigma and build understanding**
   Work to break down the stigma of dementia, including in seldom heard communities, and increase awareness and understanding of dementia.

3. **Accessible community activities**
   Offer organised activities that are specific and appropriate to the needs of people with dementia. Also ensure that existing leisure services and entertainment activities are more inclusive of people with dementia.

4. **Acknowledge potential**
   Ensure that people with dementia themselves acknowledge the positive contribution they can make to their communities. Build on the goodwill in the general public to make their communities dementia friendly.
5. Ensure an early diagnosis

Ensure access to early diagnosis and post-diagnostic support. Have health and social care services that are integrated and delivering person-centred care for people with dementia in all settings.

6. Practical support to enable engagement in community life

Deliver a befriending service that includes practical support to ensure people with dementia can engage in the community and receive emotional support.

7. Community-based solutions

Support people with dementia in whatever care setting they live, from maintaining independence in their own home to inclusive, high-quality care homes. Community-based solutions to housing can prevent people from unnecessarily accessing healthcare and support people to live longer in their own homes.

8. Consistent and reliable travel options

Ensure that people with dementia can be confident that transport will be consistent, reliable and responsive and respectful to their needs.

9. Easy-to-navigate environments

Ensure that the physical environment is accessible and easy to navigate for people with dementia.

10. Respectful and responsive businesses and services

Promote awareness of dementia in all shops, businesses and services so all staff demonstrate understanding and know how to recognise symptoms. Encourage organisations to establish strategies that help people with dementia utilise their business.

Communities working towards being dementia-friendly can apply for working towards being dementia-friendly status. The process is designed to enable communities to be publicly recognised for working towards becoming dementia-friendly and to show that they are following common criteria based on what we know is important to people affected by dementia and will truly change their experience. More information can be found at [www.alzheimers.org.uk/recognitionprocess](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/recognitionprocess)
Dementia Friends

Dementia Friends is a national initiative that is being run by Alzheimer's Society. It's funded by the government, and aims to improve people's understanding of dementia and its effects through one-hour information sessions.

People with dementia sometimes need a helping hand to go about their daily lives and feel included in their local community. Dementia Friends is about giving people an understanding of dementia and the small things that they can do to make a difference to people living with dementia.

How can I get involved?

It is easy to get involved! A Dementia Friend learns a little bit more about what it's like to live with dementia and then turns that understanding into action - anyone of any age can be a Dementia Friend.

A Dementia Friends Champion is a volunteer who encourages others to make a positive difference to people living with dementia in their community. They do this by giving them information about the personal impact of dementia, and what they can do to help. Dementia Friends Champions attend a training course, receive support as they need it, and are part of a growing network of people creating dementia friendly communities together.

You can find out more about what training is on offer in Shropshire by visiting www.dementiafriends.org.uk
WHAT’S HAPPENING IN SHROPSHIRE?

In March 2012, The Prime Minister issued his ‘Dementia Challenge’. It focused on 3 key areas:

1. Driving improvements in health and social care
2. Creating dementia friendly communities that know how to help
3. Better research

In November 2013, the Shropshire Health and Wellbeing Board signed up to the challenge of supporting the development of a Dementia Friendly Shropshire. In doing so, they joined a growing list of organisations and individuals who are working to create a county which is more dementia friendly. They have also designated 2014 as the year of dementia awareness and training in Shropshire. Staff from across the public, private, and voluntary sectors have been working with Shropshire citizens to promote dementia awareness in local communities.

Some of these groups have joined the Shropshire Dementia Action Alliance. The Shropshire Dementia Action Alliance is made up of organisations operating across Shropshire, working together to radically improve the lives of people living with dementia and their carers. Each one of these members has signed up to the National Dementia Declaration and submitted a short action plan detailing how they will work towards delivering the outcomes outlined in the declaration.

You can see which organisations have already joined the Shropshire Dementia Action Alliance, and view their action plans, by visiting www.dementiaaction.org.uk/shropshire
We want individuals living with dementia, and their carers, in Shropshire to know that they are not alone. There are many services and support available in Shropshire designed to provide them with the information and assistance that they need to live well.

Dementia Web has put together a **Dementia Information Prescription** for Shropshire. This includes a list of key services, organisations and contact telephone numbers for Shropshire where you may be able to access dementia specific information and support.

You can access the Dementia Information Prescription by accessing the link below:

[www.dementiaweb.org.uk/pdfs/dementia_web_shrewsbury_information_prescription_v2.pdf](http://www.dementiaweb.org.uk/pdfs/dementia_web_shrewsbury_information_prescription_v2.pdf)

Details of Alzheimer’s Society services in Shropshire can be found at:


Some of the larger organisations providing support to individuals living with dementia, and their carers:

**Age UK Shropshire**  
[www.ageuk.org.uk/shropshireandtelford](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/shropshireandtelford)

**South Shropshire & Staffordshire Healthcare NHS Trust**  
[www.southstafsandshropshealthcareft.nhs.uk/](http://www.southstafsandshropshealthcareft.nhs.uk/)

**Shropshire Council Adult Social Care**  
[www.shropshire.gov.uk/adult-social-care](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/adult-social-care)

**Shropshire Rural Community Council**  
[www.shropshire-rcc.org.uk](http://www.shropshire-rcc.org.uk)
RAF Cosford

The RAF Museum at Cosford has used its vast array of historic artefacts to engage and inspire people with dementia and their carers. They hold ‘outreach workshops’ in community centres, using a variety of artefacts to stimulate memory. These sessions have included a myriad of different objects: carbolic soap, Brylcreem, gramophones, old footballs and many more! The outreach workshops take place in a variety of local venues and each session offers a different way of engaging with historical objects. To aid these sessions, the museum has a portable “Memory Box” of interesting artefacts which can be taken to each venue and enjoyed by people with dementia.

York Train Station

York’s Dementia Without Walls initiative first brought dementia to the attention of British Transport Police Officers at York Train Station. The more they became aware of the condition, the more they began to see that public transport could act as a large obstacle to quality of life. One of the first steps in York Train Station’s journey to becoming more dementia friendly was a review of how accessible the station was for people living with dementia. They arranged for people with dementia and their carers to review signage and facilities and have also organised day trips, with free travel from the train companies.
DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES: CASE STUDIES

Bradford Co-operative stores

Three Bradford Co-op stores have been piloting dementia awareness in their stores. They have found that increased awareness about the condition allows them to offer a better customer service. Using the knowledge gained through awareness sessions, they have been able to relate to their customers in new ways. They now consider how the many reflective surfaces around their stores could potentially be hazardous to individuals with dementia. They have also changed their behaviour to become more accommodating to their customers, for example opening a second till if someone needs time with change or understanding that people sometimes forget to pay.⁸

North Yorkshire County Council Libraries

Hambleton District of North Yorkshire is pioneering the creation of dementia friendly libraries. Their vision is for libraries to be safe and supportive environments for people with dementia. They have been working with the local Alzheimer’s Society, training both library staff and volunteers in dementia awareness. They have found that little things have made all the difference. But they have also realised that libraries are about much more than just books. ‘Pictures to share’ publications are designed to spark conversations around common interests like gardening, and ‘Talking Books’ are available for those who can no longer read.⁹
Next Steps…

You’ve attended a ‘Dementia Friends’ session and have become more aware about what it is like to live with dementia and are ready to make a difference in your community. The question is where to start? Below is a list of practical actions that you could do to help your community become dementia friendly:

- Talk to people with dementia and their carers in your community. How do they find living in your community? What good and bad experiences do they have of living in your community with dementia?

- Assess the current level of awareness about dementia in your community. Speak to other members of your community about the condition and think about how you could raise the level of dementia awareness in your area. How many Dementia Friends Champions are in your community? Could you help put on a dementia friends session, or publicise one, in your community?

- Map out what services are on offer for individuals living with dementia in your area. Do people living with dementia, and their carers, know about these services? What additional services would benefit people with dementia in your community? How would they be delivered?

- Who else is working to create a more dementia friendly community, and importantly who else could help you achieve that aim? Are businesses, public sector bodies, and voluntary groups aware of your movement? How could they help to enhance the quality of life for people living with dementia?

- The Dementia Action Alliance is a very useful vehicle for driving the development of dementia friendly communities. Could your organisation join the alliance and commit itself to action that will help people living with dementia?
FURTHER RESOURCES & CONTACTS

Alzheimer’s Society’s Dementia Friendly Communities Page

www.alzheimers.org.uk/dementiafriendlycommunities

Dementia Action Alliance Guidance for Businesses

www.dementiacaoaction.org.uk/assets/0000/5820/New_DAA_guidance_for_businesses_251113.pdf

How to help people with dementia: A guide for customer-facing staff

www.alzheimers.org.uk/customerfacing

Innovations in Dementia Community Toolkit

www.innovationsindementia.org.uk/projects_communities.htm#communities

Joseph Rowntree Foundation’s 20 Dementia Friendly Case Studies


Joseph Rowntree Foundation’s Resource Hub for Dementia Without Walls

www.jrf.org.uk/work/workarea/dementia-resources

Shropshire Dementia Action Alliance

www.dementiacaoaction.org.uk/shropshire

Shropshire Health and Wellbeing Board

www.shropshiretogether.org.uk/health-wellbeing
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REFERENCES


4 POPPI- Projecting Older People Population Information System (2014)


6 Ibid.


8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.