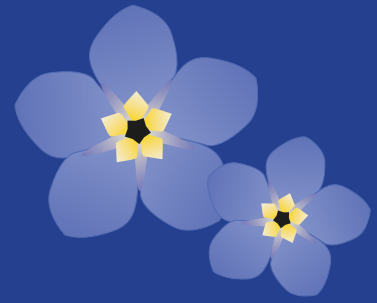


Dementia Newsletter



Autumn 2016

Words from the Editor

Hi & welcome to our first West Berkshire Dementia Newsletter!

I'm Sue Butterworth and I am really excited to be the Programme Officer for the Dementia Friendly Community project in West Berkshire. It would be great to hear from you if you would if you have a story or article that you would like to share in the newsletter.

If you would like to have a chat about the project or have any input or questions please just give me a call on **07557 859975** or email me at sue.butterworth@westberks.gov.uk

What does it mean to be a Dementia Friendly Community ?

People who are living with dementia may experience challenges in accessing everyday services that we take for granted such as the bank, supermarket or hairdressers. They may also not be able to attend some of the social activities that they used to enjoy and feel lonely. By working together as a community we can make a difference to ensure that people affected by dementia are:

- Understood
- Able to live well
- Able to live independently for as long as possible
- Respected
- Supported
- Included
- Confident they can contribute to community life

To find out more about dementia friendly communities you can access :

www.dementiaaction.org.uk/joint_work/dementia_friendly_communities

Join your local Dementia Friendly Community Forum

Across West Berkshire, volunteer community members are coming together to form Dementia Friendly Community Forums. These groups will be working with local businesses and organisations to see how they can make their town or village more dementia friendly. It might be that there are small changes that can be made to the physical environment of a business or there might be opportunities for new social activities. If you would like to be involved in your local forum or can offer services or activities in your area, please speak to Sue in the first instance. No contribution is too small to make a difference.

New West Berkshire Dementia Directory available!

The dementia directory contains information of social activities, clubs and groups that welcome people with dementia and their carers. There is also useful information about local dementia friendly services. The directory can be found at your local library, GP Surgery or Community Hospital patient information point; just ask for a paper copy.

Do you host an activity or provide a service that you would like to include in the next edition? If so please let us know, it would be great to talk to you.



West Berkshire
C O U N C I L

Host a Dementia Friends Session!

Dementia Friends is an Alzheimer's Society initiative enabling you to learn a little bit more about what it's like to live with dementia and then turn that understanding into action. This free of charge face-to-face information session lasts about an hour and there is a programme for children and younger people too: this means everyone can be involved. Why not make a commitment to become a dementia friend or even host a session for colleagues, friends or family.

Have you seen the Reminiscence Box Collection at your local library?

Our local libraries have a great selection of items from times gone by in themed boxes that provide a great talking point and opportunity for socialising for young and old alike. The boxes can be borrowed free of charge using your library card and contain a short user guide of top tips to help you get the most out of using them. If you are using the boxes in a group setting such as a care home or social group, we run a training workshop that you might find useful.

How Books on Prescription can help in understanding dementia

Did you know that your local library carries a range of books about dementia that you can borrow as part of the Reading Well Books on Prescription programme? The programme promotes self help reading to support understanding and management of our health and wellbeing. The titles available include; personal stories such as *Still Alice* and *Dancing with Dementia*, along with books to support carers and to provide information on living well with dementia. You don't need a recommendation from a health professional to borrow the books, also there are some self help guides available online to support you with your reading if that would be helpful.



Tips to reduce the risk of developing dementia

Evidence shows that taking action to adopt a healthier lifestyle can help to reduce your risk of developing dementia, as well as other vascular conditions such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease.

To help reduce your risk :

- Keep physically active
- Stop smoking, or don't start!
- Eat a healthy, balanced diet
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Keep alcohol consumption within health guidelines



Why staying connected matters

Social isolation can occur to anyone, at any age but the elderly or people affected by dementia may be more at risk of losing connection with friends and neighbours. Maintaining social contact with people, whether that is through: work, day-to-day activities such as going shopping, social activities, or attending a place of worship, is really important to our mental health and wellbeing. Research shows that lacking social connections is as damaging to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day (*Holt-Lunstad, 2015*). If you haven't heard from an elderly friend or neighbour for a while, could you find the time to drop by and say hello over a cup of tea or maybe invite them out for a walk while you chat if they are able?

To find out more about loneliness and social isolation, visit

www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/

If you would like to know more about any of the articles in this newsletter please contact :

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