

Introduction

At the end of 2017, Swindon was formally accredited by the Alzheimer's Society as working towards 'Dementia Friendly Community' status in recognition of the work that has gone on to support people living with dementia, and our plans going forward. We can also now accredit other organisations and businesses with the Dementia Friendly Communities logo.

There is so much Dementia Friendly Community work going on in Swindon, we decided to produce a quarterly newsletter to provide an update on some of this. I have been in post as Dementia Friendly Coordinator for almost a year now and it's really exciting to see projects we have been planning for a while coming into fruition. We have a very active Swindon Dementia Action Alliance who are looking for new members. If you are involved in any Dementia Friendly Community projects, or would like support starting some, please contact me.

Susan Lambert, Dementia Friendly Coordinator

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Helping to Create a Dementia Friendly Generation

Ferndale School, Grange Junior School in Stratton St Margaret and Chiseldon Primary School are the first schools in Swindon to invite us to deliver Dementia Friends Information sessions.



Many children had family members or knew people living with dementia, and had lots of questions about what dementia is including 'can I catch it?', 'Is there a cure?', 'Can it affect someone's sight?' The children left the session having an understanding of what dementia is, how it can affect someone and how they can support someone with dementia. Lauren Coley, teacher at Ferndale School said the sessions went *'really, really well, everyone has really enjoyed them and found them very interesting'*. We hope that more schools will contact us to arrange a Dementia Friends session and help create a dementia friendly generation.

New Activities for People with Dementia – Responding to feedback

If we are to make Swindon dementia friendly, it is important we ask what people living with dementia and carers want, and try and respond to these thoughts and ideas. These new activities have been developed in partnership:

Dementia Friendly Swim Sessions- starts from 19 March 2018

Dorcan Leisure Centre: 2.45-3.45pm Mondays in term time

Oasis Leisure Centre: 10.15-11.15am Fridays in term time

Special rate of £2.50 and carer swims free



Dementia Friendly Walks: Swindon Outlet Centre

10-11am –Meet outside Giraffe Restaurant. Starts Wed 14 March 2018 and free of charge. Gentle walk followed by a drink and chat at the Giraffe Restaurant



Dementia Friendly Vintage Film Showings

A series of free monthly film showings in a relaxed Dementia Friendly environment- dance, sing along. Participants take home a memory prompt memento linked to the film. Carers welcome.

Swindon Arts Centre

Monday 30 April- 2pm

Thursday 24 May- 11am

Monday 18 June- 11am

Friday 13 July-2pm

Dementia Friendly Gardening Sessions: TWIGS community Garden, Manor Garden Centre

10am every Friday for a free dementia friendly gardening session: Plant seeds, tend plants, wood working available. Carers Welcome.



Number of Swindon Dementia Friends reaches almost 5000



During a Dementia Friends Information Session you learn more about what dementia is, how it can affect someone, and look to turn that understanding into action. Sessions run across Swindon, or they can be arranged at a time and place to suit you. All sessions are free of charge and last around 45 minutes. The

sessions are adapted for children, or particular groups. We are very lucky to have a number of very active voluntary Dementia Champions who have helped us to reach the amazing total of 4,930 Dementia Friends in Swindon to date. A Dementia Friend could be anyone, even Rockin' Robin the Swindon Town FC mascot! (above).



Could your Parish or Town become more Dementia Friendly? We are currently working with Stratton St Margaret, Chiseldon, Highworth and Wroughton Parish Councils to help them become more dementia friendly. Stratton St Margaret have formed a Steering Group looking at how they can better support people living with dementia and their carers in their community.

A number of Dementia Friends Information sessions have taken place to raise awareness in the community, including to members of the Stratton Social Club (pictured above). Chiseldon hosted a Dementia Friendly Workshop with further work planned. We also linking with the Safe Places initiative. If you would like to become a dementia friendly Parish or Town, or are interested in finding out more about any of the Dementia Friendly work going on in Swindon please contact: susan.lambert@swindon.gov.uk.

Easter Activities for care home residents with dementia



Residents of Abbey House care home have been enjoying taking part in inter-generational projects with children at the local Abbey Meads Community Primary School and Busy Bees nursery. Over Easter they enjoyed a laughter filled afternoon doing arts and craft projects together. Some children helped residents write Easter cards to their loved ones, while

others painted polystyrene eggs and decorations together ready for an Easter egg hunt in the care home garden. This is a number of projects the Care Homes and school are doing together, and helps the residents to feel part of the community. Before each project the children are given a short information session about dementia and enjoy making new friends and building their confidence.

If you are doing some dementia friendly projects in your community then please let us know: susan.lambert@swindon.gov.uk

Dementia Play has Audience Spellbound

Connie's Colander was performed as part of Swindon Fringe Festival. The hour long play traces the evolving relationship of retired domestic science teacher, Connie who has Alzheimer's, and her daughter, Emily. One audience member said *'the play was just amazing and you couldn't help but get swept along as you watched the progression of Connie's dementia and the impact on her relationship with her daughter. I felt a wave of emotion by the end, the whole audience was spellbound'*. Members of Swindon Alzheimer's Society then provided the audience with a Q&A session.

New Chair for Swindon's Dementia Action Alliance



We are delighted to announce Alison Griffiths of Hoffman Briggs Solicitors as Chair of the Swindon Dementia Action Alliance. Alison is a member of 'Solicitors for the Elderly' who specialises in older people's legal issues. Alison has also been awarded the Older Client Care in Practice award. If you would like to join the Swindon DAA please contact: susan.lambert@swindon.gov.uk