

Health Liaison Board – January 2014
Swanley Dementia Friendly Communities Project – Briefing Note

Lead Organisation

Kent County Council (Dementia Friendly Communities) – Tracey Schneider
Swanley Town Council – Liz Davies
Seniors Action Forum – Geoff Parsons

Supporting Organisations

Sevenoaks District Council, GP practices, KCC Libraries, KCC Community Warden, West Kent Housing, NHS Kent, local voluntary organisations.

Swanley's dementia friendly community has been spearheaded by Tracey Schneider from KCC who organised the first meeting in Swanley on the 13th August 2013. All partners involved in health was to look at and map the existing services and provision in Swanley, what are the gaps, who is missing from the meeting that should be here, and possible actions or projects.

As a result of the first meeting in August, Geoff Parson set up a dementia friendly community swanley blog to highlight the existing services offering dementia support and awareness for residents.

As a collective group from the first meeting they where able to identify organisations who should be involved for Tracey to invite them at the next meeting held on Thursday 28th November 2013.

The areas listed below are what were being looked at during the meeting.

- Looking at the results from the Swanley survey
- Discussing various options and potential projects
- Look at what we can do individually and collectively
- Deciding on next steps for Swanley

To gain an insight into the awareness of dementia across Swanley, they asked people to complete some insight gathering surveys. They received 81 responses from residents including some affected by dementia, and 29 from local providers and organisations.

Below I have highlighted some of the results from the survey;

We asked what they knew about the types, signs and symptoms of dementia (Top five answers)

Residents told us: Memory loss, short term memory loss, forgetfulness, confusion, not recognising friends and family.

We asked what they knew of in the local area that would help or assist anyone affected by dementia (Top five answers)

Residents told us: nothing, don't know, support groups, GP surgery, Age UK.

Service and Organisations told us: Dementia café, age UK, carers learning group, Alzheimer's society, day centre.

We asked what they felt was needed to make the community or organisation dementia friendly (Top 5 answers)

Residents told us: Support, awareness, groups, training, and carers.

Services and Organisations told us: awareness, frontline staff training, customer care training, information, and awareness via press.

The results from the insight survey was used as a gathering exercise during the meeting so organisations could look at the main issues from the survey and what can each do individually and collectively to make it more dementia friendly.

Below are some of the suggestions;

<u>What do you feel, are the main issues arising from the insight gathering exercise?</u>
Lack of awareness of dementia support and pathways within local voluntary , community and business organisations, A lot of people thought there was nothing to support Low expectations about quality of life with dementia Financial struggles of households affected by dementia Lack of 1:1 support/advice Lack of information available No clear access to information Mind Gym and positive therapeutic need How to keep activity updated Many don't feel part of a community, how to include those who do not mix or join in People do not always refer correctly Lack of understanding about the functions of available services etc
<u>What can we do individually?</u>
Bring information up at Town council Invicta advocacy to provide information in regards services Bring up at cedars forum Provide info and awareness raising about lewey bodies Help link to national initiatives Focus on promoting services, resources, signposting Feedback to CLS leads in regards possible support courses Continue with the Swanley dementia Diary, blogs and pages Provide Dementia Friends Information sessions Take people along to suggested groups such as dementia café, rather than just referring. Use existing relationships to help bridge gaps
<u>What can we do collectively and with whom?</u>
Develop library as a support hub for people affected by dementia, with many other agencies Initial xmas event to be arranged with the DFC team, town council and local support groups (maybe orchards school) Dementia awareness and forward planning sessions for asda and other employers, with Geoff and other dementia friends champions

WKHA officers given info sessions after team meetings
Town and district counsellors to be dementia friends
Possible development of courses to compliment the 'carers courses '
Look at availability of finance assistance and those able to advise, maybe short courses on finance management etc
All to gain better understanding of local services so that referrals may be made appropriate,, consideration given to accompanying individuals to groups etc in the first instance.
A youth involvement aspect
Work with the Cedars PPG and also wider CCG to promote awareness
Town shops and businesses to become involved through an awareness scheme

As to the future of the group they suggested forming a Swanley 'Dementia Action Alliance'

A Local Dementia Action Alliance is a collection of stakeholders brought together to improve the lives of people with dementia in their area. They would usually include a range of organisations within a community and examples would include bus companies, taxi firms, police forces, fire and rescue services, high streets, local authorities, charities, care providers and health trust, faith groups, local associations or schools.

Through organisations and communities joining together to form Local Dementia Action Alliances we hope to create dementia friendly communities, where there is a greater awareness and understanding of dementia and individuals with dementia and their carers feel supported to remain independent and have choice and control over their lives.

Involving people living with dementia, their carers and families in your Local Alliance is central to ensuring your Alliance meets the needs within that community and becomes dementia friendly.

Members can include:

- Local people with dementia, carers, people with an interest in supporting the Alliance
- Local businesses leaders and retailers
- Local Authority, Public Services & Voluntary Organisations (eg Local Councillors, Police, Fire, Leisure Centre, Library, Age UK, Red Cross)
- Health and Social Care Providers (eg GP's, residential homes, memory clinics)

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