



Housing LIN

Connecting people, ideas and resources

Case Study Report

Going the Extra Step: A compendium of best practice in dementia care

Preventing unwanted isolation and loneliness for
people with dementia living in housing with care

JULY 2019

Dr Katey Twyford and **Wendy Wells**, Co-leads for housing and dementia with the
Housing Learning and Improvement Network



Foreword

The Housing Learning and Improvement Network used this year's Dementia Action Week 2019 to gather and share examples of extra care schemes and other housing related community services supporting people with dementia to develop meaningful relationships. These relationships can reduce social isolation and loneliness. The examples provided range from informal arrangements supported by staff or other residents to formal service provision.

This compendium brings those examples together in one place, along with further examples of best practice that we received during Dementia Action Week. Colleagues also told us about the fantastic work they were doing as Dementia Friendly organisations, and we have included a section of those examples as well.

Examples given in this compendium were provided with consent from the organisations involved. Some names have been changed to maintain anonymity.

We hope that you find this compendium useful and that it will stimulate ideas that you may want to take forward in your own organisation.

Jeremy Porteus

Chief Executive

Housing Learning and Improvement Network

Contents

Foreword	1
Contents.....	2
Being a dementia friendly organisation.....	3
1. Personal Testimonies	4
The Broughton Story... Having a tailored approach	4
Muriel's story – a care team at home	4
View from an Occupational Therapist.....	5
Good neighbours	5
2. Personalised support.....	5
BeConnected in extra care housing	5
Enriching Lives	6
A person-centred approach – developing relationships	7
Visiting volunteer programme	8
Social prescribing.....	8
Share and Care Homeshare.....	9
Help around the house - Cwm Taf Care & Repair Dementia Service	11
3. Groups and social activities:	12
Young at Heart Sheffield City Council	12
Nottingham City Homes Sycamore diner.....	13
Once Upon A Time workshop at Copperfields	14
Crowborough Community Café	15
Working better together to support people living with dementia.....	15
Badminton Court – clubbing together to visit local areas in the car.....	16
4. Organisation and community-based approaches	16
Silva Homes – working with Dementia Action Alliance	17
The Friendly Bench – a community-based solution	18
The Scotswood Garden - Newcastle Community Gardens	19
Darley Dale Reading and Discussion Group for People with Memory Problems.....	20
Housing 21.....	21
Together Housing Association	21
The Guinness Partnership	22
Anchor Hanover working with Reminiscence Learning.....	23
Share your learning	24
About the Authors.....	24
About the Housing LIN.....	24

Being a dementia friendly organisation

We all know that people living with dementia face a range of challenges. During Dementia Action Week 2019 (20-26 May) we heard how organisations working across the extra care housing sector are making valuable contributions, supporting people with dementia to face these challenges. We heard examples of organisations that have adopted, or are in the process of adopting, the Alzheimer's Society dementia-friendly housing charter.¹

The dementia-friendly housing charter provides guidance on delivering a dementia-friendly approach to housing. It isn't just aimed at housing providers; the charter is aimed at the full range of professionals working with the housing sector, including those working in social care and community-based health care. It is designed to enhance wellbeing for people living with dementia by facilitating good practice in supporting people in their homes.

Best practice should support what people living with dementia say is important to them. Dementia Statements tell us the things that people with dementia have said are essential to their quality of life.² Dementia Action Week 2019 focused on the rights of people with dementia to continue with day to day family life, to be included in their communities, and not to live in isolation.

It is tremendous to hear how organisations are developing their services to prevent social isolation and loneliness among people living with dementia. There were lots of examples of embedding good practice through the exterior and interior design of buildings. Many dementia friendly features are not costly and can be retrofitted as well as designed into new buildings. There is evidence of the difference dementia friendly design can make to enabling people to find their way around and be included in the extra care community.

Some schemes told us how they include specific facilities to support people living with dementia through memory rooms – a place residents and their family can visit to relax and reminisce. Local libraries are also a good resource, able to lend memorabilia for reminiscence sessions.

A number of organisations have identified key staff members to be Dementia Friends Champions³ and made a pledge to deliver Dementia Friends sessions to both staff teams and residents.

The rest of this Compendium is split into personal testimonies of how people with dementia have been supported to live well as well as possible, examples of personalised support that can be arranged for residents, examples of groups or social activities, and lastly different organisational approaches that have been adopted.

We would like to thank the following organisations for their contributions:

Brendoncare Foundation, Care 24, East Midlands Homes, The Guinness Partnership, Homeshare, Housing 21, North Star Housing Group, Nottingham City Homes, Sheffield City Council, Silva Homes, Soha housing, Stafford and Rural Homes, Together Housing Group, West Kent Housing Association and Your Homes Newcastle.

Note: *The views expressed in this feature have been provided by the featured organisations and are not necessarily those of the Housing Learning and Improvement Network.*

¹ https://www.housinglin.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/AlzheimersSociety_HousingCharter.pdf

² For more information about the Dementia Statements please visit the Alzheimer's Society website: <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/dementia-professionals/dementia-experience-toolkit/dementia-statements-and-rights-based-approaches>

³ For more information on being a dementia champion please visit the Alzheimer's Society website: <https://www.dementiafriends.org.uk/WEBArticle?page=what-is-a-champion#.XQNml4hKhaQ>

1. Personal Testimonies

It is great to see personal testimonies about individual services, but it reveals that there is still much work to do to spread the message about the range of services that are available to support best practice in meeting the needs of people living with dementia.

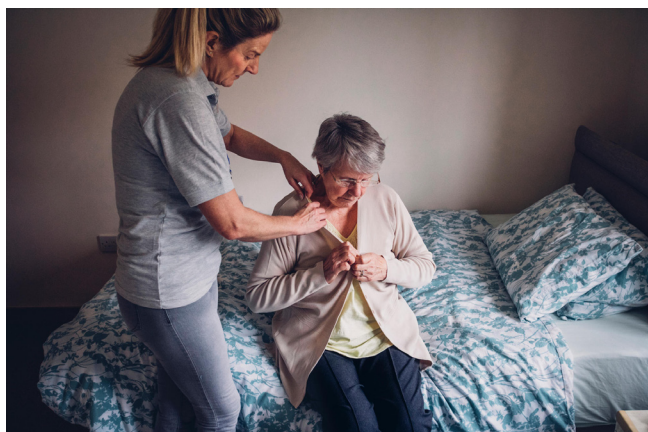
The Broughton Story... Having a tailored approach

My 91-year-old mother-in-law developed dementia. Until then she was living alone fit and extremely bright. She moved in with us as my husband did not want her to move into residential care. We were both working in different directions. As a self-funder it was difficult to receive social services help. By trial and error we found day care for her. As my husband travelled 5 junctions on the M25 timings were difficult. The day care had a residential section where they would give her an evening meal and even a bed if he was very late. (A record 5 hours stationary on M25 was the worst). This removed the stress for us as we had two children living at home.

The local psychiatric hospital paid for her to go into respite for two weeks every two months which enabled us to keep her living at home until she died three years later. The fall-out was that one of our children could not cope with this bizarre granny and went to live with a friend of ours. Another complication was when my Scottish mother was given a terminal diagnosis with congestive cardiac failure. She lived on after the 6 month prediction and had a cerebral haemorrhage which left her alive but disabled. She refused to go into a care home and I set up a care package in Scotland with 3 residential carers living with her at home. She lived on (self-funder) for fifteen good quality years. All during the period of mother-in-law's dementia journey.

Muriel's story - a care team at home

I have a friend who used a care agency to provide care for her mother who lived with them in Kent. The agency specialised in caring for older people with dementia (and providing nannies for families too). I used them until I had 3 permanent employees in place at my mother's house in Scotland.



Again, my friend was self-funding, and this type of care was expensive as the agency staff were very well paid and agency fees were applicable; but the care was superb. The dementia carers were changed every 5 days by the agency. This was Muriel's story.

In both our cases our mothers lived well within a family setting and in the case of my mother-in-law there was never a time that she didn't know one of us.

View from an Occupational Therapist

Intisar Osman, Freelance OT, Able-2 Occupational Therapy Services

I recently visited a client residing at Windmill Court to undertake a community OT assessment and was impressed with the facilities on offer at the extra care service, specialising with Dementia service-users.

I had never come across a residential facility with an in-house hairdresser as part of its communal facilities, and I observed residents being treated whilst I passed through. The special touch provided gave me a sense of Windmill Court's attention to detail for their specific client group. It was an unforgettable encounter that I did not anticipate and my heart was uplifted considering my previous experiences visiting similar services. I was pleasantly surprised during my brief visit.

Good neighbours

At Roland Rutter Court (Housing 21) we had a lady who was very involved in our social activities, and when she got dementia she missed them because she kept forgetting to come down. Her neighbour started knocking her door and walking down with her, so she didn't miss out.

2. Personalised support

There were a number of examples of personalised support being provided both by extra care housing providers and by organisations from outside the extra care housing scheme. See the examples below.

BeConnected in extra care housing

Stafford and Rural Homes (sarh.co.uk) offers 17 Independent Living Schemes and 1 Extra Care scheme, Jubilee Court.

When Jenny* moved into Jubilee Court, she had four medication calls a day. SARH staff quickly saw an improvement in Jenny and her ability to complete tasks independently and so her care plan was reduced to just two medication calls daily. Jenny started going for a walk independently around the block every afternoon, after taking the same route for a few weeks with a care worker. When Jenny attended the memory clinic, her score had improved, and this was attributed to the support she had received at Jubilee Court.

After a while, Jenny became increasingly confused, so a revised care plan was put in place with the flexibility to offer support on the days when Jenny was struggling.

Jenny's dementia has worsened but, having built an understanding of what she likes and of what causes her distress, staff are able to gauge how and when to offer support. The flexible, personalised response that SARH offers is clearly having a positive impact.

BeConnected encourages older people who are lonely or socially isolated to engage or reconnect with their local communities, through a programme of free activities and events. SARH customers with dementia are offered volunteer help with the booking process, transport and at events to encourage their involvement.

The SARH **Wellbeing Service** started working with Dorothy*, aged 85, last year. It became clear that Dorothy had not collected prescribed medication for four months and had not presented at clinic appointments. She was initially willing to have assistance with shopping and sorting out post. Subsequently she agreed to a GP assessment which led to a diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease.

SARH Wellbeing Coordinators help customers link in with support available, so that they are able to manage better and stay as independent as possible. Dorothy was referred to BeConnected and attends several events a month, with reference to a calendar and a reminder phone call from SARH Wellbeing. Her Coordinator assists with Dorothy's shopping list, using verbal prompts and pictures. She helps Dorothy put the items away, so that labels are facing outwards and linked items (like sponge pudding and custard) are next to each other. Dorothy is escorted to appointments to enhance her understanding of them. All of this is with Dorothy's consent and her involvement to agree what will work best for her.

**names have been changed to maintain confidentiality*

How can you find out more?

For more information contact: housing@sarh.co.uk or elizabeth.lodge@sarh.co.uk

Enriching Lives

The St Monica Trust provides a tailored service for residents who are either living with dementia or just want some informal company and a couple of hours to do something of their choice.

What does it offer?

The Enriching Lives service matches a staff member to the individual and develops a relationship offering companionship and befriending. Although this is a chargeable service it works on a very flexible basis and can be arranged at short notice. One resident really looks forward to having her weekly manicure, going to a salon to get her eyebrows tinted and then having a coffee in Westbury On Trym. This lady calls her Enriching Lives carer 'her Wednesday girl'.

Another resident, who has the Enriching Lives visits on a weekly basis, says she loves getting out to the shops and being able to look at things, even if she doesn't buy anything. She loves to sit and

have a coffee afterwards, and people-watch with her carer. Both these women have a diagnosis of dementia and go out very little. The weekly visits have a positive impact on their lives.

Another example is one that enriches the lives of three residents who are supported to go to lunch in Sommerville restaurant most days. The carers support them by either collecting the residents from their homes or reminding them. All three residents have a diagnosis of dementia.

The three like to sit together for lunch. They share a bottle of wine and chat away about things from the past, their marriages, jobs, boyfriends, and lots of other things. They sometimes start an impromptu sing-along, which results in the whole restaurant joining in. Often, after lunch, the women will go together to one or other of their apartments. The spontaneity is what makes it stand out, and the enjoyment that the residents have during the lunch shines through.

How can you find out more?

For more information contact: Jeanette.lles@stmonicastrust.org.uk

Follow on Twitter: [@St_Monica_Trust](https://twitter.com/St_Monica_Trust)

A person-centred approach – developing relationships

What does it offer?

A resident at one of Housing 21's schemes has Alzheimer's. Her husband who was main carer died suddenly from a brain tumour 3 years ago. To begin with staff were concerned she would not cope on her own. Some of her neighbours stopped visiting her and she refused to let carers into her flat.

Joint support from the services and the family helped to turn this around. The scheme managers, working with the carers, slowly managed to get her to allow them into her flat. Her family visit every day now and take her out for lunch.

Court Managers and Dementia Friends sessions helped to educate residents about dementia. Now, every morning, she sits outside or in the lounge and as residents pass they all stop for at least five minutes and have a chat. There is an active social club which puts on activities. She attends everything, which helps to support the family, and gives them much needed days off. The key here is working together; multiple agencies working together to best support the resident and to include the family. The staff always give her family a copy of the scheme's newsletter so they know when everything is on. Staff also keep in contact with her family to help build those important relationships.

Now, when someone new signs up to move in as a new resident, the staff talk to them about dementia. Most people have been touched by it in some way with family or friends.

How can you find out more?

For more information contact: communications@housing21.org.uk

Follow on Twitter: [@Housing21](https://twitter.com/Housing21)

Visiting volunteer programme

What does it do?

This visiting volunteer programme is provided by the St Monica Trust.

Ian has dementia and lives with his wife Susan in an apartment in Riverhouse. They moved from Cornwall in December 2017 to be closer to family. Susan had been finding it increasingly difficult to identify appropriate day care services. She found external care staff generally only sat with Ian in the apartment, and a short term respite stay in the care home wasn't successful. Ian is a retired headmaster and needs mental stimulation, conversation, and exercise.

Through the St Monica Trust visiting volunteer programme a volunteer was identified and introduced to Ian and Susan. The volunteer had previously cared for his mother who had dementia and he was keen to use those skills as a volunteer. Ian and the volunteer now meet regularly, often going out for trips in the car, and often involving a trip to the pub which Ian enjoys.

During this time Susan enjoys her own activities, including attending events in The Sanctuary and doing yoga in the gym. The break allows her time to improve her own mental and physical wellbeing.

How can you find out more?

For more information contact: roger.ward@stmonicastrust.org.uk

Follow on Twitter: [@St_Monica_Trust](https://twitter.com/St_Monica_Trust)

Social prescribing

There were examples of service managers helping individual residents living with dementia to benefit from social prescribing.⁴ One specific example was provided by Housing 21.

Fuller Court - linking with the local social prescribing service

One of our residents was supported by his family to move to Fuller Court from Aylesbury. The move was made in his best interests as his family were struggling to support him from a distance which included a 120 mile trip. He had recently been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease and was struggling with the transition, and being away from all his usual routines and familiar faces. Not long after moving to Fuller Court his condition deteriorated and he showed signs of depression - perhaps due to his sudden change of environment, new lifestyle, and living arrangements.

One of the extra care housing team came across the Social Prescribing service by chance, and immediately applied for him to have an initial meeting with the Social Prescribing Officer. They met with him and his family, who had Power of Attorney, and discussed his interests. As a result,

⁴ For more information on social prescribing the Kings Fund report on the website:
https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/social-prescribing?gclid=CjOKCQjwi43oBRDBARIsAExSRQGfUSn33kBZqh-vZGIKdtu8G47m6l-DOnR-tiI_oIuaQIOuerOsACw4aApKzEALw_wcB

he was helped to pursue local walking, football, and swimming opportunities which he had always wanted to do. This seemed to have a positive impact and he became less withdrawn. He began attending more coffee mornings and other activities at Fuller Court. Soon afterwards he moved to a flexi-care living scheme.

How can you find out more?

For more information contact: communications@housing21.org.uk

Share and Care Homeshare



Homeshare brings together people with spare rooms with people who are happy to chat and lend a hand around the house in return for affordable, sociable accommodation – see: homeshareuk.org/

In this example, in exchange for a low cost accommodation, a Sharer lives in the home of someone elderly and/or with a support need (such as dementia) and offers an agreed level of practical help each week in

their spare time. The practical support is normally around 10 hours a week and helps with such things as shopping, cooking, light cleaning and miscellaneous tasks and errands. Homeshare also gives the natural friendly companionship that comes from sharing a home.

As well as the obvious benefits of Homeshare – nutritious home cooking, shopping, and other practical help around the home – the hidden benefits include reducing anxiety and loneliness, increased security, mental stimulation through conversation and shared meals, reduced chance of falls, better sleep, reassurance for families, and early warnings (eg the Sharer can alert the family if the person seems ill, or if they notice medication has been forgotten). Buying in this help on a ‘per hour’ basis can be very expensive, and often not possible.

Homeshare arrangements normally support people in their own homes. However, the concept of Homeshare (and intergenerational living) can also work in care homes (taking pressure off staff and giving residents extra time, company and stimulation) and other forms of sheltered accommodation.

The example below shows how it has been used to support Jennifer who was living with dementia:

Case Study

Jennifer (82) was diagnosed with Dementia in 2014. Share and Care Homeshare arranged and managed a homeshare arrangement for her.

Jo explained; "When mum was diagnosed, her life started to get smaller and more limited. Eventually she had to stop driving and she would forget arrangements so grew increasingly isolated. She was also finding everyday tasks difficult. Council carers came in twice a day, but that wasn't really the sort of help she needed – she actually needed a little practical help and, mostly, companionship."

"My mum used to teach music and even after her diagnosis she still played the piano and enjoyed a sing-song."

We believed a Homesharer would enable her mum to stay in her home for longer. "She wasn't ready for a care home, but she was less independent, and no longer liked being on her own; she loves company! Having a Sharer would make up for the times when we, and other visitors, were unable to be there and would also reassure us."

Tell us about your Mum's Sharer

"Judith, a teacher, was very carefully chosen. It was serendipity. I am so grateful for what Share and Care do and how they do it. Judith quickly became part of the home, taking over the day-to-day running of the house and mum's diary. She and my mum built up a wonderful relationship. Judith was artistic and they would do painting together. Judith also played the recorder and they would share the music together. She was very proactive and would take mum out. And then there was sharing meals with mum."

How did the finances work?

"When Judith came we reduced the number of carer visits, which saved so much money. Mum thrived under the arrangement and was in better health physically and mentally than she would have been without it. A 20-30 minute visit from a carer, however nice, doesn't give that cognitive stimulation that having a Sharer can give."

"Share and Care gave us a year's grace"

Judith left in 2017 when Jennifer's dementia had declined. Jo says: "Share and Care gave mum an extra year in her own home. I always felt so supported by Share and Care's advice."

We also caught up with Jennifer's Sharer, Judith

"On meeting Jennifer, I thought, 'this would work', despite her Alzheimer's. Our shared love of music was an important factor; Share and Care picked up on that shared interest."

"I became very close to Jennifer, and got a lot out of Sharing with her. My self-confidence rose while I was there. She was so sweet and would pick up on if I needed a hug. She might not remember my name but she would be relieved that I was staying the night. Although forgetful and living with Alzheimer's, she was still very intuitive and loving."

How can you find out more?

For more information contact Caroline Cooke and Amanda Clarke at: info@shareandcare.co.uk
Follow on Twitter: [@ShareandCareOrg](https://twitter.com/ShareandCareOrg)

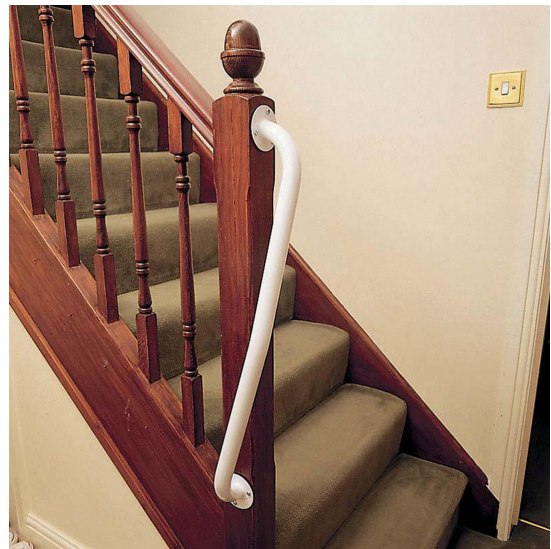
Help around the house - Cwm Taf Care & Repair Dementia Service

What does it do?

Cwm Taf Care and Repair provides a dedicated dementia casework service in partnership with key organisations to proactively address the housing needs of people with dementia and their carers. It aims to:

- avoid crisis situations that can arise when the home of a person with dementia is unfit or unsuitable for their needs and which can hasten a move into hospital or residential care.
- reduce the response times taken when urgent repair work is needed to the home of a person with dementia by having detailed knowledge of that home
- have detailed knowledge of the support network of the person with dementia to make it easier to respond to potential crisis situations.
- ensure that those with dementia and their carers have access to detailed information on housing matters when and where appropriate e.g. on first being diagnosed.
- deliver early intervention measures to clients living with dementia to ensure increased independence at home e.g. grab rails, stair rails, external rails.
- help raise awareness and promote a greater understanding of dementia through delivery of Dementia Friendly training.

Being able to make your way easily around your house and being able to get in and out of the house are all essential in helping people living with dementia to maintain social connections and help prevent loneliness.



How can you find out more?

For more information contact: Nerys Williams, Chief Officer, nwilliams@cwmtafcr.org.uk, 01443 735932

Follow on Twitter: [@CwmTafCandR](https://twitter.com/CwmTafCandR)

3. Groups and social activities:

We heard how it is important to work with residents to offer local services and activities that reflect what people want to do. Common examples to encourage social stimulation and promote well-being for people living with dementia included:

- Weekly coffee mornings, afternoon teas, tea and toast
- A chatter and natter table in the extra care café or restaurant where customers can sit if they are happy to talk to other customers
- Arm-chair aerobics
- Games for the brain – special dementia friendly games are available for purchase and have been used at weekly sessions with encouragement for people of all abilities to take part
- Singing for the brain
- Tai Chi supported by ‘buddies’ who are all Dementia Champions
- Local history group, reminiscence in local history
- Intergenerational activities, e.g. knitting groups
- Themed events e.g. 50’s day

Specific examples are included in the rest of this section, together with contact details if you would like more information.

Young at Heart Sheffield City Council

Sheffield City Council’s Older Persons Independent Living service runs the Young at Heart project across all of their 30 Sheltered Housing schemes. The Young at Heart project aims to reduce loneliness and isolation, through a diverse range of activities designed at getting tenants out of their flats, socialising with their neighbours and trying new activities.

Young at Heart have worked in partnership with a number of organisations over the years which have included; Sheffield Hallam University, Heeley City Farm, Ignite Imaginations and local schools to name but a few.

Working with Heeley City Farm they have been able to fund a project called Farming Comes to You. The farm visit schemes across Sheffield bringing with them a range of animals from guinea pigs and rabbits to chickens and



goats. These animal therapy sessions prove very popular with all of our tenants who benefit from interacting with the animals which often evoke memories from times gone by.

This year Young at Heart will be continuing to bring animal therapy into schemes along with other projects which include intergenerational work with schools: a local school befriends a scheme and visits once a month to take part in various activities such as crafts, singing and dancing. Other projects include reminiscence sessions, art therapy sessions, health and fitness sessions, and dance sessions. All of these complement the many tenant led activities which happen within their schemes.

For further information you can contact Melissa Newbould, Young at Heart Project Officer on melissa.newbould@sheffield.gov.uk

Nottingham City Homes Sycamore Dining

Sycamore Dining brings people together over good quality meals. Customers are encouraged to sit together at large tables, so they mix, get to know each other, and make friends.



The challenge is to get lonely and socially isolated people, such as older people. People from all backgrounds are encouraged to visit the diner, including people living both with and without dementia.

Volunteers prepare all meals using surplus food. Not only does this reduce food waste, it means that Sycamore

Dining is able to raise funds from the social eating activities. All money raised is donated to the City of Nottingham Scout District, and helps fund Scouting activities for young people who might otherwise not be able to afford it.

The dining events take place at a range of venues across the city, usually monthly. Sycamore Dining is working with potential partners to put in place transport arrangements to ensure the most vulnerable of residents can access these community meals.

[You can see a short video about Sycamore Dining at this link.](#)

The community meals are proving a real success in reducing social isolation, and Sycamore Dining has been able to support people with memory problems, including some with a formal diagnosis of dementia. They are hoping to work in partnership with their local Clinical Commissioning Group / NHS to have such meals become an integral part of social prescribing.

For more information contact: Sam.Williams@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk

Once Upon A Time workshop at Copperfields

A creative group of women living with dementia have rediscovered magical memories while creating textile books, thanks to an innovative new workshop.

Artist and therapist Tracie Peisley started working with women and carers at Copperfields in Newington alongside Thanet community worker, Rachel Connolly.

The sessions, Once Upon a Time, see the group share stories and reconnect through sewing practice, games and song.



Photo Tracie Peisley

Tracie prepared linen covers and calico pages for the books and invited the women to personalise them with photographs, pockets, and hearts for loved ones.

The results have stimulated a beautiful exchange of heartfelt stories with one woman, Rita (pictured), including photos of riding horses and regaling stories of childhood – Rita's devoted husband was a horseman and they rode together.

Tracie says there is consistency through each session. She said: "One of the things that astounds me each week is that despite the way the illness strips memory and function there are consistent themes that return each week through painting, sewing, drawing and reflection. There is a story asking to be heard and expressed."

Group work is fundamental to the outcomes. "It's not work I can do alone; the relationships are essential and the agency offered up by another person is critical," she added.

Storytelling plays an integral part of the workshops with a listening game with Tracie reading fairy tales. She said: "They are stories that help children make sense of intense dramas when they are small, made available to nourish the minds of the older generation. "

Singing individually and collectively provides a melodic ending to the sessions.

Racheal Salvesen, Copperfields manager, says the residents have enjoyed the sessions and are now looking to sew in their spare time.

The workshops are funded by ROSA UK, a charity for women, and forms part of arts festival, POW!

For more information contact: duncan.wilson@wkha.org.uk



Photo Tracie Peisley

Crowborough Community Café

What does it do?

The Crowborough Community Café was launched by Sussex Housing and Care last winter and is supported by the Wealden Dementia Action Alliance. The café provides an opportunity for people living with dementia or memory loss, and their carers, to get together once a month and enjoy an activity, complimentary refreshments and each other's company. Sussex Housing & Care host the group every other month at Woodlands care home in Crowborough.

Visitors from the local community join in with residents at Woodlands and have so far enjoyed an African drumming session and a sing along with Dementia Support East Sussex. Both of these activities enabled participants to enjoy music and physical exercise, and gave mental stimulation as well as an opportunity to reminisce.

The community café provides a safe and secure environment where people can relax and have fun. Staff at Woodlands are trained in dementia, most of them are dementia friends and there are a few dementia champions across the organisation.

How can you find out more?

For more information contact: Woodlands care home, Beacon Road, Crowborough TN6 1UD, woodlands@sussexhousing.org.uk, 01892 653178

Follow on Twitter: [@SxHousingCare](https://twitter.com/SxHousingCare)

Working better together to support people living with dementia

What does it do?

Maxine Ford is an Independent Living Officer in the Rother Area for Housing Association Radian. Working with local charity, Dementia-Friendly Alton, Maxine helps to reduce social isolation and loneliness by organising activities and charity events in the Rother community.

Maxine said, "I have been helping the charity Dementia-Friendly Alton for a little while now by facilitating a Memory Lane singing group twice a month for residents at Radian's, Orchard House.

"I also hold coffee mornings to raise money for the charity and am currently working with them to organise a charity walk at the Jubilee Fields in Alton on 27 June, which will help raise money to fund more workshops and groups for people with dementia.

"To help keep our Orchard House residents moving, I am in the process of organising a Zumba Gold group. Dementia-Friendly Alton are kindly assisting with this project, by helping with the funding."

How can you find out more?

Follow on Twitter: [@radiangroup](https://twitter.com/radiangroup)

Badminton Gardens – clubbing together to visit local areas in the car

What does it do?

At Badminton Gardens, Bristol, some of the clients have shopping and social visits on their care plans. By clubbing together they can go out in the car with a carer. When the weather improved, the time was used differently to take several clients out for a drive around their old home and local area, which really gets them talking about their fond memories and how much the landscapes change. It has been hugely beneficial especially for those who have dementia as people often retain much of their longer term memories and would otherwise not get the opportunity to get out and re-visit those special places.

How can you find out more?

For more information contact: communications@housing21.org.uk

Follow on Twitter: [@Housing21](https://twitter.com/Housing21)

4. Organisation and community-based approaches

There were many examples of how an organisation-wide approach is taken to support people to live well with dementia. Key to having a successful organisation approach is to focus attention on:

- Core principles that support wellbeing of all individuals including those living with dementia. For example one organisation embedded the five ways to wellbeing⁵ across its service
- Design of the building
- Support for people to develop relationships and be part of the community.

Some organisations ensure all staff become Dementia Friends on joining the organisation, and provide staff training for front line staff in how to communicate well with someone living with dementia.

Some housing providers have made links with their local Dementia Action Alliance groups⁶ and are working with other organisations to be part of a dementia friendly community.

The rest of this section contains examples of organisations who have adopted a dementia friendly approach.

⁵ For more information on the five ways to wellbeing see the poster on the website: https://www.mind.org.uk/media/4220803/five-ways-to-wellbeing_poster.pdf

⁶ For information on Dementia Action Alliance please see the national website: <https://nationaldementiaaction.org.uk/>

Silva Homes – working with Dementia Action Alliance

Silva Homes (formerly Bracknell Forest Homes) is a not-for-profit charitable housing association that owns and manages 6,200 tenanted properties and 1,200 leasehold properties in Berkshire, Hampshire and Oxfordshire, including eight retirement living schemes. In 2017 Silva Homes became members of Bracknell Forest Dementia Action Alliance (DAA). Bracknell Forest DAA has members from health, social care, voluntary and private sector. One action from the DAA is to work together to reduce social isolation for people with dementia and their carers.

Silva Homes' dementia friendly Health and Wellbeing Officers organise regular activities in their retirement living schemes for physical, mental and social stimulation. Activities for residents include, bingo, coffee mornings, knitting groups, painting lessons, quiz afternoons, themed parties, film afternoons, daytrips, BBQs and much more. Silva Homes Community Investment also offer activities to anyone over 55 years old in Bracknell Forest. These activities include arts and crafts, IT tuition and exercise classes for all abilities e.g. seated Zumba, exercises to 50s music, seated futsal and tai chi. Singing sessions are held weekly and attendees include local dementia groups. Before and after activities, there is always time for social interaction.

Community Investment have also organised intergenerational activities. These have included playing board games which provided learning and enjoyment to both the school children and older people. Another activity involved a professional storyteller gathering childhood memories/stories from attendees then subsequently worked with local school children to compose songs that were performed to an audience.

Over the past two years all of the 223 people surveyed reported that these activities had a positive impact on their lives. Quotes include 'it's something I look forward to every week, the sessions are fun, and I like learning new songs' and 'loved the entertainment side, game and cake it was much more than what I expected'. To raise awareness of activities they are promoted on posters and scheme managers will encourage people to attend. They are advertised in Silva Homes' customer newsletter, online and through word of mouth. The DAA members also promote the activities programme, and it is promoted in the Dementia Adviser Newsletter which is sent to people with dementia and their carers via post or email, as well as to other health and social care practitioners. These activities have proven to be extremely successful in reducing loneliness and improve wellbeing for older people, including people with dementia, and their carers.

How can you find out more?

If you would like further information, then please contact:

Karen White - karen.white@berkshire.nhs.uk;

Danielle Lane - danielle.lane@silvahomes.co.uk

Follow on Twitter: [@wearesilvahomes](https://twitter.com/wearesilvahomes)

The Friendly Bench – a community-based solution

The Friendly Bench is an innovative kerbside community space in Leicestershire.

Specifically designed, The Friendly Bench is a safe, easily accessible mini-community garden with integrated seating situated on unused space within communities for people to meet, chat, and connect with each other, to places and with nature, reducing social isolation and increasing community cohesion.



These kerbside community parklets have been envisaged to help encourage connections between communities, help tackle loneliness, encourage physical, mental and social activity and improve the quality of life of all, including the elderly, socially isolated and those with limited mobility's life, by connecting them with people, to places and with nature. Welcoming, inclusive and accessible outdoor social spaces for all, the core principles that guide The Friendly Bench are:

Connecting people – Offering regular opportunities for social interaction and engaging in community life, growing and strengthening social networks, improving confidence and well-being amongst older people, the socially isolated and those with limited mobility and their wider community through friendship and is the focus for monthly community events and activities.

Connecting places – Purposefully designed and situated, The Friendly Bench provides a safe, easy to navigate and comfortable place for those with dementia and/or limited mobility to rest, enabling access to local amenities and public places which helps contribute to people being able to live independent and fulfilling lives.

Connecting with nature – Enabling easily accessible interactions with nature, wildlife and the outdoors to help improve physical health, mental wellbeing, memory, communication, social behaviour and help improve self-esteem and life satisfaction.



In its first twelve months, The Friendly Bench pilot has:

- Provided regular volunteering opportunities to 15 people through regular activities at The Friendly Bench
- Created a friendly, supportive environment where neighbours of all ages and abilities have met, often for the first time, felt valued, understood and a part of their wider community.

- Engaged 495 attendees at one or more of the monthly volunteer-led activities/events at The Friendly Bench, including a Royal Wedding Party, Eden Project's the Big Walk visit/celebration, Great Get Together, Blokes, Brew and Banter and Defibrillator Training Event.
- Reconnected old friends, introduced people to new acquaintances and linked residents living in Housing Association-owned independent living properties to their wider community.
- Introduced and encouraged other community organisations, public health and public services to engage with a wider and more diverse audience through attendance at and shared training events.

For more information contact:

Lyndsey Young, Founder of The Friendly Bench CIC - thefriendlybenchtm@gmail.com

Follow on Twitter: [@Friendly_Bench](https://twitter.com/Friendly_Bench)

The Scotswood Garden - Newcastle Community Gardens

Your Homes Newcastle (YHN) used its Community Investment to help more people with dementia or limited mobility enjoy being outdoors in a safe and peaceful environment. The Scotswood Garden opened in February, with a celebration event attended by some of the residents of Your Homes Newcastle's sheltered housing schemes.

The residents enjoyed the garden, which boasts a covered seating area, raised beds, a levelled walkway and composting toilet, all arranged in a way that makes it more accessible and easier to benefit from. One resident said: "It's really important to have this kind of thing because it got me out of the house. I would have stayed in and sat by myself if I hadn't gone. It's a treat for us elderly people."

Another resident from a different sheltered housing scheme said: "I like the way the garden is set out with the new covered-in area and raised beds for us slightly older people. I used to be quite isolated and by visiting the garden I have met new people and volunteers."

YHN's Community Investment Fund aims to strengthen local communities and partnerships and to decrease levels of social isolation, especially in areas where YHN has properties.

The CEO of the Scotswood Garden, Karen Dobson, said, "Thanks to the hard work of our volunteers and the funding from YHN and other partner organisations, we now have a fabulous, accessible garden that gives people with mobility issues or dementia the chance to enjoy the health benefits of being outdoors in a safe and welcoming space."

The garden is now accessible and YHN has established a solid partnership with the charity themselves. Residents with dementia who live in YHN's sheltered housing schemes will soon be taking part in a 14 week horticultural therapy course.

To learn more about the Scotswood Garden, please go to sncg.org.uk

For more information contact: jill.hayton@yhn.org.uk

Follow on Twitter: [@newsfromyhn](https://twitter.com/newsfromyhn)

Darley Dale Reading and Discussion Group for People with Memory Problems

What does it offer?

Darley Dale reading and discussion group provides a monthly social activity for people with a memory problem and their carers/ family members.

The reading group offers an informal and social environment in which to listen to someone read a poem or a piece of writing, to join in discussion and to make new friends. The group involves a chat and a coffee on the last Thursday of every month.



The group is run by volunteers of Derbyshire Carers Association and is free to attend. It is held at Meadow View Community Care Centre, which is an award-winning building designed to be dementia friendly. Group members can use the café at the Centre afterwards if they want to stay for lunch, extending the social group and friendship opportunities.

The group provides an opportunity to have:

- a chance of a cup of coffee or tea and cake in a relaxed dementia friendly environment
- some mental stimulation
- an opportunity to meet other people and help reduce isolation

A family member who comes with someone with dementia said:

"It has given us somewhere to go with other people and do something we enjoy. What we appreciate it that it is not a dumbed down activity, and the structure allows people to contribute at all different levels. It brings out the best in people, everyone is able to contribute to the best of their ability. The whole thing, including the cake and coffee has helped us gel as a group. It is a pleasant experience for the carer and for the person - it doesn't feel like a caring task. We look forward to it, and it gives us something to prepare in between times"

One of the people with dementia who attend said:

"I go to a book club, but I'm not sure how much longer I'm going to be able to keep going. It is too much because I can't remember the details about the book or the characters, even though I have just read it. It is good to come to this group because I can relax, and I can bring bits of poetry I have found, and I can read them with the group - who seem to enjoy it".

How can I find out more?

For more information contact: kateytwyford@gmail.com

Housing 21

All Housing 21 staff become Dementia Friends on joining the organisation. They also have a target to make 9,000 of our residents Dementia Friends by 2021.

Housing 21 Head of Strategic Engagement said:

“Our new contractors are required to commit to the Dementia Friends initiative as part of their contractual obligations. We are encouraging current contractors to do the same.

We have a new charter which means that anyone working on our Courts must become a Dementia Friend prior to work starting.

We are currently in the process of developing a Dementia Advocate service. This will involve members of staff being able to apply for these positions (spread across England). They will receive enhanced training and be able to support any member of staff who wants additional support for people living with dementia in their schemes.

We continue to embed good practice around dementia across the organisation in all our design and services. We chair the national Dementia and Housing Working Group which seeks to highlight the role of good housing for people living with dementia.”

How can I find out more?

For more information contact: communications@housing21.org.uk

Together Housing Association

Together Housing Association are part of their local Dementia Action Alliance group and is working with them to develop a Dementia Friendly Community. The Dementia Action Alliance provides a forum to share best practice and ideas, such as the Tovatafel game which provides a stimulating and fun activity that can be projected on a table, and which can be used free of charge from some libraries.

Together Housing supports staff to become Dementia Champions and work closely with the Alzheimer’s Society and tenants to talk to tenants about how dementia affects us and how we can support people we know with dementia. This includes developing a folder of information for tenants and relatives to read. The organisation also ensures that marketing material for extra care housing reflects the diversity of customers and promotes respect and understanding.

How can I find out more?

For more information contact: Sue.Lewis@togetherhousing.co.uk

The Guinness Partnership

It's predicted that over one million people in the UK will be living with dementia by 2021, and that Guinness has over 1,000 customers living with dementia. Access to personalised, dementia-friendly services is likely to play a vital role in enabling them to live independently for as long as possible.

Being a dementia-friendly organisation has become part of our everyday business, and, as set out in our Dementia Strategy, we aim to capture and share best practice across the sector.



Over the past five years, we have:

- Published an award-winning report about becoming a dementia-friendly organisation: <https://www.guinnesspartnership.com/care-services/community/becoming-dementia-friendly-organisation/>
- Completed a two-year Housing and Dementia Project, identifying ways to adapt services in order to better support customers living with dementia. An independent evaluation report, published in 2019, shows that we've reduced stigma around dementia, and are seeing permanent cultural changes across Guinness.
- Helped shape the national Dementia Friendly Housing Charter as part of the Dementia Housing Working Group. We've also signed up to the Charter's commitments.
- Developed our own dementia-friendly environment guide illustrating best practice across internal and exterior design. Its principles have guided refurbishments (such as the Jubilee Centre, Waterlooville, and Duncan Cooper House, Havant), as well as the design of our flagship Extra Care service, Quayside.
- Showcased our work at key industry events, and supported awareness campaigns such as Dementia Action Week and Dementia Friends.
- Provided colleagues with a range of learning options (including at least three hours' training relevant to roles) to develop the skills and knowledge needed to deliver appropriate, person-centred services to customers living with dementia.

How can I find out more?

For more information contact: wendy.wells@guinness.org.uk

Follow on Twitter - [@YourGuinness](#) [@GuinnessCare](#)

Anchor Hanover working with Reminiscence Learning

Within Anchor Hanover we are working with The Archie Project. It's an exciting intergenerational dementia awareness project that links local primary schools with us to ultimately dispel the fear and stigma often associated with dementia and create more dementia friendly communities.

At an estate in Dulverton, where we started the work with Reminiscence Learning, year 4 children visit regularly and have built significant relationships with each other, to the extent that families now visit and interact with the older people outside of the project too. It has formed a bridge in the community where the generations are now closer, and dementia is not seen as anything different.

The focal point is a book which tells the story of a scarecrow called Archie who has dementia. Archie becomes drained of colour, when he is in a state of ill being, feeling unloved and invisible. The colour gradually returns when he is included and treated no differently to his friends. This simple concept relates to both children and adults and has made a tangible difference to many of our customers.

Mike Stables, Dulverton Estate Manager says "The project breaks down the intergenerational barriers and sometimes a real bond forms between older and younger people. I have found that not only does it help reduce isolation by residents participating in this project, but it stimulates long forgotten memories when we do the life stories. Taking the resident back to their school days for example and reviving those memories can turn a previously quiet audience into one bursting with excited interaction, it has made a really difference here"

Emma Green, project lead, explained: "The children read the book Archie's story alongside completing a workbook. Exeter University carried out research which highlighted that children aged eight and nine are the key age for positively changing their stereotypes about older people and in particular, how people living with dementia should be looked after in their community."

Carly Hatch, Headteacher at Dulverton Junior School, explained: "It teaches the pupils empathy and they learn how to engage and communicate with elderly people. It's lovely to see how quickly the barriers break down and how they find common ground."

Following the success of this project we are really excited to be introducing it to other estates, starting with Badminton gardens who are all set to start in September, watch this space!

How can I find out more?

For more information contact: rowena.hindle@anchorhanover.org.uk, or office@reminiscencelearning.co.uk

Follow on Twitter: [@AnchorHanover](https://twitter.com/AnchorHanover) [@RemLearning](https://twitter.com/RemLearning)

Share your learning

The Housing LIN is keen to continue to share best practice in dementia friendly approaches to housing with care through our Blogs and Viewpoints. If you have any examples from your own organisation that you would like to share via a Blog or Viewpoint, or would like some bespoke support to adopt dementia friendly practices, please contact Katey Twyford and Wendy Wells, Housing and Dementia co-leads for the Housing LIN, dementia@housinglin.org.uk

About the Authors

Dr Katey Twyford is a Housing LIN Associate, researcher, business consultant and coach. She is the Housing LIN's co-lead for housing with care for people affected by dementia, alongside Wendy Wells, Head of Policy and Business Implementation, Guinness Care.

About the Housing LIN

The Housing LIN is a sophisticated network bringing together over 25,000 housing, health and social care professionals in England, Wales and Scotland to exemplify innovative housing solutions for an ageing population.

Recognised by government and industry as a leading 'knowledge hub' on specialist housing, our online and regional networked activities:

- connect people, ideas and resources to inform and improve the range of housing choices that enable older and disabled people to live independently
- provide intelligence on latest funding, research, policy and practice developments, and
- raise the profile of specialist housing with developers, commissioners and providers to plan, design and deliver aspirational housing for an ageing population.

To view other resources on housing for people with dementia featured by the Housing LIN, visit our dedicated webpages at:

<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingandDementia/>

Published by

Housing Learning and Improvement Network

c/o PRP, The Ideas Store
10 Lindsey Street, Clerkenwell
London EC1A 9HP

Email: info@housinglin.org.uk

Web: www.housinglin.org.uk

Twitter: [@HousingLIN](https://twitter.com/HousingLIN) [@HousingLINNews](https://twitter.com/HousingLINNews) [@HLINConsult](https://twitter.com/HLINConsult)