

East Herts Dementia Friendly Action Group

East Herts Council and its partners through the collaborative Dementia Friendly Action group is working hard to ensure people living with dementia are understood, respected and supported in all its towns and villages. With regular online Dementia Friends Awareness sessions more people in the district are becoming dementia friends and are aware of and understand dementia. This enables the group to work with partners and volunteers in the community to ensure people with dementia can continue to live in the way they want to and in the community they choose in East Herts.

The group focuses on every day and ordinary events as well as special circumstances i.e. going to the cafe they have always been to, the cinema, the post office. The partnership is investing in training/awareness raising sessions across the board. The group is keen to reach out to people living with Dementia and find out what they want, think of ways to inspire people to do this. East Herts Dementia Friendly Action group does this by actively engaging carers and people living with dementia in the Action Group. Every effort is made to hear their voices, experiences and suggestions by organising the meetings at times that enables them to attend, having a specific agenda item 'slot for carers' to listen to their voices. A number of members of the group are Dementia Champions and they delivered regular Dementia Friends session as needed. Since the pandemic the Dementia Friends Awareness sessions are being delivered online by a Alzheimer's Society approved Champion Volunteer – which helped the district to have more Dementia Friends Champion.

The initiative is fully supported by the Council by allocating time and resource to the Community Wellbeing Programme Officer to lead the group to give it a stable structure. A number of Councillors/Members of the council are directly involved with the group and regularly attend the meetings.

Recently, Julie Marson, the local MP attended one of the meetings and agreed to be the Ambassador for Dementia Friendly Action group in East Herts and local and national level.

Referrals and GP involvement are actively encouraged through the Council's Social Prescribing project and a number of partners are actively engaging in discussion with the GPs.

The Council's Community grants programme has funded a number of projects delivering activities for people living with dementia and the grants policy clearly states

supporting application to groups and individuals supporting vulnerable people's health & wellbeing.

This past year the council funded:

1. All Sorts Dementia Group £1380 - to set up a multi-generational arts and crafts weekly activity during respite session for members living with dementia at Southern Maltings Art Centre in Ware.
2. Stepping out with Carers CIC (new) - to organise three sociable, free led walks in Bishop's Stortford, Hertford and Ware for carers and the people they care for.
3. Re-engage, formerly Contact the Elderly (new) - to expand new Call Companions telephone befriending in East Hertfordshire, especially in Bishop's Stortford, where the council has a strong local team, dedicated volunteers, and a track record in delivering success. Beneficiaries are the "oldest old" according to applicant.

The action Group has an action plan which is updated and monitored regularly at each meeting.

Social Media – we have created an [East Herts Dementia Friendly Action Group Facebook page](#)

The following activities are being delivered under the bullet point headings. All of these activities were well attended, worked across organisational boundaries and were directly as a result of either people living with dementia and their carers' suggestion or through consultation or extensive research.

Due to Covid19 Pandemic a number of planned activities could not take place or continue but as soon as the restrictions are lifted the plan is to bring back these sessions. There are some excellent examples of organisations that have adapted themselves to the needs required by people living with dementia.

Also, please see a few highlights below:

Arts, Culture, leisure and recreation

- The Council owned Hertford Theatre was showing Dementia Friendly Film on a monthly basis - specifically designed with no adverts or trailers and lighting was slightly raised throughout the film for those who were living with dementia and their family/carers. These screenings were specially designed for people with memory loss and their friends and careers. Tea, coffee and biscuits included in the price of £5 (no charge for carers) for people to have a chat to make or meet new friends. The films started at 1:30 and the café opened an hour before.

- Linking to the Dementia Screening day there was regular Chatter Tables and Health Memory cafés
- Before Covid19 Hertswise were sign-posting/referring Hertswise clients to the Dementia Friendly Screenings – Hertford theatre and any other relevant groups – Herts Musical Memories, Singing Down Memory Lane, local companionship services, All Sorts in Ware and other day centre/provision, local sport clubs and Active Ageing, HILS (Hertfordshire Independent Living Service).
- One of the Dementia Champion members of the group delivered Circle dance for dementia to care homes and day centres as well as exercise to music, belly dance and Bollywood dance entertainment.
- CST (Cognitive Stimulation Therapy) Today group on a Wednesday was for people living with mild to moderate dementia where people living with dementia enjoy singing, dancing. They also enjoyed arts and crafts with the benefit of a professional artist working as a volunteer for the group which was very popular.
- A Monthly drop in Dementia Friends session was run in the Learners Library, Herts & Essex Hospital (3rd Tues 5.30-7.30pm). This was a memory musical playlists to support those with memory loss as the evidence was so compelling that tuning into music from our 'memory bump' period (age 10-30) could be as beneficial as medicine. This was financially supported by the East Herts Council's grants programme.
- Hertford Museum delivered a Reminisce project that had been funded by the Council. The project was halfway through the trial period of 10 sessions given to local lunch clubs and community groups; they received positive feedback and ideas to enhance the project.

In 2021 our plan is to continue with the above activities in a Covid safe environment and take the key themes from the East Herts Cultural Strategy:

The Dementia Friendly Action group has:

- championed the needs of people living with dementia
- made people aware of the health & wellbeing benefits of arts and culture
- agreed to have specific activities in the Cultural Strategy
- joined as a representative of the Dementia Friends Action group on East Herts Cultural Strategy Delivery group to ensure the delivery of the strategy caters for people living with dementia in the district

The group will also focus on 3 actions which deliver a positive, measurable impact for those living with dementia as a pilot from Little Hadham Village Hall (LHVH) for the others to follow:

- ✓ The provision of a pilot digital tablet loan scheme with accompanying digital champion support both by phone and face to face at digital workshops on Little Hadham Village Hall (from July 21 dependent on social distancing measures)
- ✓ The provision of live streaming services from Little Hadham Village Hall into the homes of those living with dementia who would like to enjoy dementia friendly entertainment and activities from their armchairs. For Example, bingo, cinema club , movie sing alongs (to be piloted Mar- July 21 and dependent on broadband speeds)
- ✓ The provision of regular peer group support via a community cafe at Little Hadham Village Hall for particularly vulnerable groups who may be living under the radar with memory loss or undiagnosed dementia due to isolation or depression. For Example, farmers, retired older people, widows/widowers and those living on their own etc. (to be piloted July 21 dependent on social distancing measures)

Businesses and Shops

We are already engaged with a number of Businesses in the district. Due to the pandemic, we have not been able to progress in this area. But, when lockdown restrictions is lifted, and when Businesses start to open, we will take the key themes from East Herts Business/retail community and ask for 3 actions from each partner organisation which delivers a positive, measurable impact for those living with dementia in the district:

- ✓ Named coffee shops & Restaurants implementing & measuring significant dementia friendly measures such as clear signposting and helping hands for those living with dementia
- ✓ Shops & food venues coming together during dementia action week to drive change as before
- ✓ Peer group support and a voice for those living with dementia in their own families

Children, young people and students

We will continue with our work with East Herts schools and colleges and ask for 3 actions from each partner organisation which deliver a positive, measurable impact for those living with dementia.

- ✓ named schools nominating young Dementia champion to deliver Dementia friends sessions to every teacher and student (sept 21)
- ✓ Students bringing alive dementia friendly material/action in subjects e.g. Art, drama. IT, English
- ✓ Peer group support and a voice for those living with dementia in their own families

Community, voluntary, faith groups and organisations

We will continue to work with East Herts based groups and ask for 3 actions from each partner organisation which deliver a positive, measurable impact for those living with dementia:

- ✓ Monthly dementia friendly church services at named venues
- ✓ Dementia friends champions in named organisations to deliver dementia friends sessions
- ✓ Peer group support for those in named orgs living with dementia in their own families

Fire and Police

We are delighted to have representations from these two services and they have committed to delivering specific activities to support people living with dementia in the district (Draft Action plan in progress):

- ✓ Named EH service decided to create a dementia champion to runs DF sessions
- ✓ Named EH service included dementia friendliness training and impact into working practices
- ✓ Peer group support for those in Fire & Police services living with dementia in own families

Health and Social care

The highlights in this area has been the council's East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2023 Under Priority 4 for East Herts Council and its Partners - Promote positive health and wellbeing for all

- [East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019 - 2023](#)

help those who have dementia to live well and better understand the impact of dementia on families and individuals	<p>Deliverer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote dementia friends champions training and dementia friendly environments <p>Enabler</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help groups to enable individuals and families to live well with dementia • assist partners in earlier dementia diagnosis • support adaptation of services to meet dementia need • help those with dementia to live a healthy lifestyle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dementia training provision • more dementia friendly environments • better support and understanding for those living with dementia • improved dementia diagnosis • services understand dementia and how to support individuals • individuals with dementia have healthier lifestyle outcomes <p><i>Combined partnership delivery</i> <i>See East Herts District Profile Health indicators.</i> http://fingertipsreports.phe.org.uk/health-profiles/2017/e07000242.pdf <i>Local reporting on community and lifestyle</i></p>
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In terms of how the EHSPS and the Healthy Hubs East Herts have contributed to these actions or the CWBP team please see entry under each heading taken from tables:

Deliverer

- promote dementia friends champions training and dementia friendly environments
- all the historic work the council has done in this area underpins to the re-application we are making now and support through this priority in the HWB strategy
- The Healthy Hub East Herts will be the main avenue for promoting and delivering dementia friends training to partners, public, staff and volunteers through accredited trainers.

Enabler

- help groups to enable individuals and families to live well with dementia
The EHSPS and Healthy Hub East Herts referrals provide support to families and those living with dementia by connecting with Hertswise, Dementia Adventure, partners and church support groups to help these individuals live well with dementia.
- assist partners in earlier dementia diagnosis
- Promote awareness raising via dementia friends training and other campaigns with partners to aid increase in dementia diagnosis.
- support adaptation of services to meet dementia need
- East Herts works with HCNS and PCN link workers to support dementia needs especially in terms of providing prescriptions and food support during the lockdown periods in 2020/21.
- help those with dementia to live a healthy lifestyle

- Linking in to the Healthy Hub so support and advice can be given to facilitate healthy living for those living with dementia to aid independent living.

Added to the above, we will take the key themes from East Herts Health & Social Care teams and ask for 3 actions from each partner organisation which deliver a positive, measurable impact for those living with dementia

- ✓ Named EH service decides to create a dementia champion to runs DF sessions (TBC)
- ✓ Named EH service includes dementia friendliness training and impact into working practices
- ✓ Peer group support for those In these orgs living with dementia in own families (TBC)

Housing

We are delighted to welcome Clairon Housing joining the our group alongside East Herts Council Housing Services

3 actions to support above from EH Housing team are -

- ✓ Clarion Housing to create a dementia champion to runs DF sessions
- ✓ Clarion Housing measure impact of Dementia Friendliness within their housing stock & working practices
- ✓ Peer group support for those in EH Housing system with dementia in their own families

Transport We will continue to work with the Council's licencing and Enforcement Services to ensure all East Herts licenced Taxi drivers attends dementia friends session. We will also work with

Local community transport ask for 3 actions

- ✓ Continue with new East Herts Taxi service DF sessions & implement actions with all drivers (ongoing)
- ✓ EH bus services integrate dementia friendly action/signposting on all buses & working practices
- ✓ Peer group support for those in transport system living with dementia in own families (timings)

This is an area the Action group would like to explore more as East Herts is fairly stretched with over 100 villages and hamlets.

The future plan

The Action group is committed to keep delivering its current activities, explore more collaborative working opportunities. The action plan will be updated regularly to capture new areas of work and monitor progress.

Home Instead will continue to the following:

- ✓ The provision of free family workshops and advice to anybody in the Community.
- ✓ Facilitate our unique Home Instead City & Guilds accredited Dementia course to all our staff (Mandatory) and selected other parties who agree to our Terms & Conditions .
- ✓ Seminars to be delivered either digitally but preferably in person, post Covid Restrictions permitting. Each Seminar will be tailor made to suit individual need whilst adhering to our City & Guilds course principles.
- ✓ Facilitating the vital connections (Digital and social) which will unite people back into the care system. This will carry huge benefits of enhancing all round wellbeing, friendship and quality of life. Home Instead will also link in with other Individuals and groups and support related initiatives.