

Worthing Dementia Action Alliance AGM Report

December 2018 – December 2019

The past 12 months has seen our Alliance grow significantly in the Worthing district, we have increased our presence locally allowing more opportunities for people affected by dementia and carers to have their voices heard and their community continuing to receive Dementia Friendly status.

Funding

May 2019 saw our coordinator's funding from the Big Society coming to an end so it became high on the WDAA agenda to secure further funding. In April 2019 CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group) agreed to fund the coordinator post for a further year and ensure the vital work happening in Worthing continued.

Members of our steering group put in a pitch to the Kent Surrey Sussex Dementia Care improvement Network to run more Dementia Pop Up Hubs across Worthing and Adur as part of a research project. They were successful in their pitch and have been delivering hubs in clinical and community settings as part of this funding since June.

We were also successful in a bid to the Lottery Awards for All to have a Dementia Hub Advisor that would work alongside the coordinator and volunteers to deliver hubs every week. Lilian joined our team in September 2019 and has already delivered 30 hubs as well as supported all the memory cafes across Worthing and Adur.

We wanted to look at ways we could communicate more effectively with our community and support the Memory Cafes. This led us to crowd fund with WSCC Spacehive platform and both Adur and Worthing CLC's awarded us the money. So far we have paid for 6 Musical CST sessions across Worthing and Adur, updated our website with more local information including Adur. We were able to provide refreshments for an open space audit and free pottery sessions for people affected by dementia with Southdown leisure.

We are hugely thankful to the Worthing Lions for supporting us this year and paying for our public liability cover – without this we couldn't run our many hubs which have in the past year supported over 150 people.

Our relationship with Home Instead Senior Care Worthing has been a really valued one and even more so that with their help we received some money from their Bring Joy Foundation to offer refreshments and music for our Dementia Action Week.

Social Media

Being creative in ways that we communicate with the public has seen us increase our social media usage this year. With an already successful website which Fine Marketing manage for us, Facebook page and Twitter it was time to branch out into the world of Instagram!

With over 1000 followers across all our platforms we are connecting with more working age carers and local businesses wanting to get involved. Showcasing what we are achieving in our community is very important and our recent launch of the Dementia Friendly Car Parking Spaces has certainly seen our work in the public eye and the need to continue educating and reducing the stigma around dementia.

Education

Ensuring our people understand some of the challenges people with dementia face has become a huge part of what the WDAA do and this is achieved through social media, presentations to groups and Dementia Friends sessions.

Our champions have worked hard to deliver as many sessions as possible in the past year and have created between them nearly 800 Dementia Friends!



Our key message is that anyone can become a Dementia Friend, any time, anywhere! From sessions in supermarkets, GP surgeries and even multi-story car parks there has been an increase in awareness but also actions they are undertaking to be part of our Dementia Friendly Community.

A great outcome from delivering Dementia Friends sessions is people feeling inspired to become Dementia Champions and we've seen 4 people do just that meaning we can offer more sessions to our community.

Dementia Pop Up Hubs

Over the past 12 months we have delivered nearly 60 hubs across Worthing and Adur in both clinical and community settings. The hubs are organised and run by our coordinator and dementia hub advisor with support from volunteers and health professionals such as Carers Support West Sussex and Alzheimer's Society.



We've seen over 150 people who have visited the hubs to get timely support or advice with getting a diagnosis, accessing services or signposting.

One of the goals of the hubs was to make them as accessible as possible and to do that we started popping up evenings and weekends at Worthing Hospital, Churches and community fairs.

Highlights

There have been many successes this year, one of these has been working with Adur & Worthing Council to bring Dementia Friendly parking spaces to Worthing, being the first town in the South East to offer these. BBC Sussex loved the idea and invited our coordinator to talk about them during breakfast radio.

Being a Dementia Friendly town is about ensuring people with dementia and carers can access their community and these spaces are key to show that people can still live well with a diagnosis.



Worthing's parking attendants have all attended a Dementia Friends session and have really got involved with everything from cleaning the spaces, painting highly visible lines and supporting the launch of the spaces.

We owe a huge thanks to the Sussex Sign Company for producing the wayfinding signs and fitting them for us.

The spaces took nearly a year to get right by ensuring we consulted a wide range of people with lived experience, auditing the premises was key to ensure those using the spaces would be safe.



Our partnership with Worthing Theatres has shown how seriously they take being part of our Alliance with weekly dementia friendly screenings, regular Dementia Friends sessions by their own champion, audits by people affected by dementia and their carers and dementia awareness as part of staff inductions.

Also not forgetting members of the Worthing Town Cryers invited to take part in a relaxed Panto showing to feed back on their experience.

BBC Music day this year had a focus on bringing music to people affected by dementia and in partnership with Guild Care and Mind West Sussex we brought the event to Worthing. 25 people affected by dementia and carers came together to celebrate music at the Guild Care Annex which was led by Ric Gray Sing a Song and Smile. With a wide range of ages from 30 to 90 it didn't stop anyone from dancing to Mary Poppins!



Supporting new initiatives

Supporting events and groups to be Dementia Friendly has become a key part of our coordinators role and can be done with little or no cost at all.

Sporting Memories, The Glamour Club, Chattie Café, Worthing and Adur Memory Cafes, Durrington Festival, Southdown Leisure Live Well Day, Our Town and Cycall are just a few of the groups that have made adaptations to be inclusive for everyone.



No action is too small and some simple changes to their signage, audits of their venue and attending Dementia Friends sessions has meant that Worthing has more varied choices for people affected by dementia.

Dementia Action Week

In May 2019 the Worthing Dementia Action Alliance took on the challenge of reducing stigma and isolation for people living with Dementia and their carers.

Worthing Hospital hosted us for the week with pop up hubs and local school choirs joining us to launch the week and end it on a high.

Stagecoach for the 2nd year running supported our Dementia Action Day with a double decker vintage bus and willing driver who drove 60 people affected by dementia and their carers through Worthing to our hosts for the day Abbeyfield Ferring Society.

Stay Active, Centre Group, Worthing Town Cryers and people living in our community enjoyed a day of music and an amazing buffet served by St Andrews boys school student council.



One of the quotes we received on our Dementia Action day was – *“He got on that bus not believing in his diagnosis but after today he’s taken the first step in accepting and living well with dementia.”*

It’s hard to put a figure on how many people we supported and engaged with over the week through our activities and social media but when you get feedback like this it adds value to what we achieved that day.

Open Meetings

We have held 4 Open Meetings this year and invited the public to find out more about what we are doing in their community.



Hosted at Venues such as MET College, Abbeyfield Ferring Society, St Lawrence Surgery and Offington Methodist Church as part of Worthing Mental Health Week. We’ve had guest speakers from My Life Films, Guild Care, Sussex Partnership and Dementia UK.

The meetings have become an open forum to guide the alliance and inform professionals and people affected by dementia and carers about issues and challenges that we need to action.

At our last AGM we heard from Paul Tonking Head of Benefits and Revenue Adur & Worthing Councils and learnt that someone diagnosed with a dementia is entitled to a council tax reduction. Following on from Paul's presentation as an Alliance we have worked with the council to raise awareness of this reduction and in March 2019 all Worthing and Adur households received their council tax letter which stated that someone with a Dementia could get the reduction.

Figures show that 25 more households are now accessing this benefit.

Arun & Adur

Our coordinators funding has meant that we've been able to have a more active role in Adur and supporting their community to work towards a Dementia Friendly Status.

Our pop up hubs have started in Lancing, Shoreham and Southwick libraries as a way to engage the public and gather interest.

Members of our steering group were part of the Adur GP protected education day where over 90 people attended and expressed interest in establishing themselves as dementia friendly GP surgeries.

We are working and supporting Adur with community engagement with a large event planned for January 2020.

In November Arun successfully established themselves as a Dementia Friendly Community and have created an action plan that will see us working together on areas such as transport and memory cafes.

We are working with Arun's steering group by sharing knowledge and where we've had successful partnerships we support each other so that there is consistency for people living with dementia and carers.

The Worthing Dementia Action Alliance would like to thank our Alliance members who have worked with us to establish Worthing as a Dementia Friendly Community and continue improving the lives of people affected by dementia and carers.

