

## **Norfolk Library and Information Service: Dementia best practice**

### **Background**

Norfolk Library and Information Service works in a number of ways to ensure that libraries in the county are Dementia friendly, this followed a survey of local people with Dementia and memory loss which identified that '*local leisure facilities, library services, bus services and local councils can do more to be friendly to service users with Dementia*'

As a result, Norfolk Library and Information Service adopted its Dementia Friendly Library Strategy. Our aim is to make it easier for people with Dementia and their carers to use our service, and to support staff to serve them more effectively. It will enable us to maintain our existing customers who might have, or be developing Dementia. If they do not find it easy to use the library they are likely to stop using it

Improvements in Dementia care has been identified as one of the three major objectives of the Norfolk Well Being Board and library activity features in its action plans

The highlights of the strategy are set out below:

**Staff training:** By March 2016 – 100 % of library staff will be trained as 'dementia friends' Dementia Friends is a national initiative that is being run by the Alzheimer's Society. The Dementia Friends sessions aim to improve knowledge of dementia by helping people understand what living with the condition might be like.

In addition to Dementia Friends being offered to library staff, public dementia friends sessions are held in libraries across the county

**Norfolk Reminiscence Collections:** Runners up in the Libraries Change Lives awards in 2013.

Our Reminiscence Kits and Packs are particularly beneficial for individuals at various stages of memory loss and those with communication difficulties. They can be used by individual carers at home or in a group in a residential care setting. The Reminiscence Kits and Packs contain a variety of multi sensory triggers. Themes of the packs include domestic life, 1960s, keeping healthy, the seaside and shopping. While full instructions in their use is provided in the packs, Norfolk Library and Information Service offers free training to people in reminiscence to support their care for people with Dementia and memory loss

**Norfolk Dementia Book Collection/ Reading Well Dementia Books on Prescription**

Our precursor to the reading Agency's national Dementia books on prescription was launched in May 2013. This has been subsumed by the new Books on Prescription scheme

We work with Public Health on health prevention issues and our plans involve the creation health hubs or healthy libraries to improve awareness of public health and health improvement to Norfolk residents.

As part of this project, Norfolk Public Health has provided funding to pay for 25 new Reading Well Books on Prescription Collections for Norfolk libraries and mobile libraries. This will help to raise awareness of dementia in communities and provide information and support for anyone with dementia and their families, friends and carers.

The Reading Well Books on Prescription Dementia Collections will be placed in Norfolk libraries that are in areas which have a Community Dementia Learning hub. The Community Dementia Learning hubs are being developed by the Norfolk & Suffolk Dementia Alliance.

The new Reading Well Dementia collections will be promoted to GPs & Health professionals via Norfolk CCG groups, to colleagues in Public Health and local Alzheimer and Age UK groups. The collections will also be promoted to dementia support groups in the community such as carer's cafes and community health events throughout the county.

### **Dementia Information Hubs**

Is a partnership with the Alzheimer's Society to create information hubs in all Norfolk's 47 libraries and 9 mobile libraries. Simple and easily accessible information for people diagnosed with dementia and their carers will be available

### **Shared Reading**

Community librarians in Norfolk have been trained in the practice of Shared Reading. Shared Reading is based around Read Aloud groups which meet regularly.

Shared Reading courses are offered to people with dementia and their carers, either as closed groups solely for people with dementia or as part of open courses where readers come from a variety of backgrounds

### **Cognitive Stimulation therapy - Norwich prison**

The Cognitive Stimulation Therapy group for elderly life sentenced prisoners at HMP Norwich has been running for two years, providing support for older people with cognitive difficulties within the walls of the prison. It is an innovative project and, as far as we are aware, unique, being the only prison based CST group in the UK. CST is a psychological therapy designed to be delivered in groups to assist stimulation and maintenance of cognitive function in people with mild to moderate dementia. Wing staff have noted an increase in socialising and less withdrawal, and have also commented on how participants take more pride in their appearance, smartening themselves up for the group.

### **Surf's Up**

Is a big lottery funded project aimed at increasing the confidence of older people using digital technologies. Over 2000 older learners have increased their IT skills as a result of attending Surf's Up, many of them are carers of people with Dementia. We work with local dementia cafes to offer IT learning to carers while their cared for person is enjoying café activities. The impact of IT learning for carers of people with dementia can be seen below

*"I have gained confidence and am very grateful for the support. I care for my husband who has Alzheimers and this course has made a big difference to my life. I can now e mail my son in the Philippines and keep in touch. I've also been able to find a spa product that I used once in a hotel and I would never have thought of searching online before I did this course. This course has opened up the world for me, I no longer feel so isolated and alone as I can now access friends and family and find information when I need to. In my situation it has made my life so much more bearable." ( woman carer)*

### **Surf's Up has been superceded by Get Digital**

#### **Ensure that Libraries are part of the local dementia strategy and JSNA**

We worked with colleagues in Public Health to ensure that the Norfolk Library and Information Service Dementia Friendly Library Strategy was part of the Dementia Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and subsequently the Norfolk Well Being Boards dementia action plans.