

## **Dementia Friendly Communities – An Update Report**

### **Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee**

**8 March 2017**

#### **1. Background**

1.1. Dementia Friendly Communities is a programme led by the Alzheimer's Society in the UK which facilitates the creation of communities that are inclusive and supportive of people affected by dementia. The aim of the programme is to establish local structures and partnerships where professionals from all sectors work closely with community members, volunteers and people affected by dementia, to identify ways in which communities can become more dementia friendly.

1.2. Alzheimer's Society oversee a recognition process, whereby local communities can apply to be officially recognised as 'Working Towards Becoming Dementia Friendly.' In order to achieve this, communities must submit action plans and provide regular updates on the progress against the following set of criteria:

- Ensure the right local structure is in place
- Identify dementia champions locally
- Plan to raise awareness of dementia
- Develop a strong voice for people living with dementia
- Focus on key identified areas locally
- Plan to update on progress

1.3. A key aspect of creating Dementia Friendly Communities is the roll out of Dementia Friends information sessions. The aim of Dementia Friends information sessions is to raise awareness and create a better understanding of how dementia can affect a person, their carers, friends and loved ones. Dementia Friends also focuses on practical ways to support people affected by dementia, and aims to inspire people to think of ways they can support people affected by dementia in their day to day lives.

1.4. Additionally, a key element to the successful implementation of Dementia Friendly Communities is to establish ways of engaging with and working local shops and businesses to support them to become dementia friendly.

1.5. In April 2014, the Cardiff and Vale Dementia Taskforce met for the first time, and the Cardiff and Vale Dementia 3 Year Plan was launched in July 2014, identifying the following four key themes:

- Making structural changes to economic, cultural and environmental conditions
- Improving infrastructure and access to services for all
- Strengthening communities
- Strengthening individuals

Two areas (Cardiff West and Barry) were identified to pilot the work towards becoming dementia friendly, with the aim of rolling out the learning to support further Dementia Friendly Communities by 2017. An overarching steering group was formed to oversee the development of the pilot areas and begin the roll out of the Dementia Friendly Communities programme across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

## 2. Progress

- 2.1. A community event was held at Fairwater Leisure Centre on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2013 to launch the work and aspiration of Cardiff West to become a Dementia Friendly Community. The event was attended by the then Minister for Health and Social Services Mark Drakeford as a keynote speaker.
- 2.2. The two pilot Dementia Friendly Community areas of Cardiff West and Barry were officially recognised by Alzheimer's Society as 'Working Towards Becoming Dementia Friendly' in December 2015.
- 2.3. As part of the pilots, a number of key elements of the Dementia Friendly Communities process were developed that were able to be utilised by other areas beginning to work towards the recognition process. These included:
  - Dementia Friends Champions trained to deliver Dementia Friends information sessions
  - Kite-Mark checklist criteria developed to support shops/businesses to work towards dementia friendly status
  - Information for volunteers to help recruit shops/businesses on to the Kite-Mark scheme
  - Information leaflets for shops/businesses to join the Dementia Friendly Communities programme
- 2.4. Following the completion of the two pilots, a number of communities expressed an interest in beginning to work towards becoming Dementia Friendly Communities. These included the Neighbourhood Partnership Areas of Cardiff North, Cardiff South West, Cardiff City and South and a number of areas in the Vale of Glamorgan in addition to the continuation of the two pilot areas of Cardiff West and Barry.
- 2.5. During the summer of 2016, initial meetings and discussions took place to explore the opportunity to work towards Cardiff becoming the first dementia friendly capital city in the UK. A series of meetings were held to discuss how core local authority services could contribute to the creation of a dementia friendly city and support and compliment the ongoing work of local groups (currently aligned to the Neighbourhood Partnership Areas).
- 2.6. During quarter 3 of 2016/17, a number of planning meetings took place and in February 2017, a Cardiff city-wide plan was finalised to submit to Alzheimer's Society for the city to receive 'Working Towards Becoming Dementia Friendly' status.
- 2.7. The Neighbourhood Partnership Areas of Cardiff South West, Cardiff City and South, Cardiff East and Cardiff North currently in the process of establishing local steering groups.
- 2.8. Chapter Arts Centre was among the first of the community venues in Cardiff to achieve dementia friendly status in 2016, with a number of other key venues such as

the Principality Stadium and St David's 2 shopping centre progressing work to become dementia friendly.

2.9. There are currently over 7,000 Dementia Friends in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

### **3. Challenges**

3.1. The early challenge of progressing Dementia Friendly Communities was the fact that the programme was relatively new in Wales, and thus the pilot areas of Cardiff West and Barry were amongst the first communities in the country to go through the process. This meant that it was necessary for the steering groups to learn and adapt to the process along with the Alzheimer's Society staff who were involved in supporting the groups.

3.2. The competing priorities faced by professionals involved in the local steering groups also meant that progressing actions and developing priorities of groups sometimes took longer than planned.

3.3. An additional ongoing challenge has been to establish the most effective ways to engage with businesses from the private sector. One approach that has been successful is to utilise local knowledge and contacts within communities to engage with smaller businesses. However, a regional or national approach is required to engage with larger retailers at a more strategic level in order to ensure staff are released for training and managers are supported to make changes to premises in order to make them more dementia friendly.

### **4. Next Steps**

4.1. The continued development of a Cardiff city-wide approach will allow the City of Cardiff Council, partners and local Dementia Friendly Communities steering groups to comprehensively plan and progress actions targeted across the whole city.

4.2. The city-wide approach will allow, where applicable, for actions to be progressed within the City of Cardiff Council which affect the whole city, and allow the local Dementia Friendly Communities steering groups to focus their attention on developing smaller areas of the city to become dementia friendly.

4.3. The overarching steering group will coordinate the priority areas to focus on, and will explore the opportunities to engage with all sectors across community life in Cardiff to ensure that the city is as dementia friendly as possible.

4.4. This will include focussing on areas that have not yet been progressed including transport, retail, sport and recreation, education and other identified sectors.

### **5. Conclusion**

5.1. The Alzheimer's Society Dementia Friendly Communities programme provides a recognised structure along with essential support and guidance from Alzheimer's

Society to create communities across the UK that are supportive and inclusive of people affected by dementia.

- 5.2. The City of Cardiff Council has an opportunity to build on the work that has been developed so far, to ensure that progress continues to allow Cardiff to become the first dementia friendly capital city in the UK.

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