



Hello everyone and a very Happy New Year to you all.

For me, as I write this, it is not yet Christmas and there is still lots of preparation to do. At the time of writing, two of our three Food and Friends Lunch Clubs have held their Christmas meals, and the third will take place in a few days – these lunch clubs have made such a difference to both carers and cared for and we are so very grateful to our hosts. However, as you read this it will all be over and last year but a memory. New Year has always been the time for each of us to take stock of what has been achieved and to look forward to our hopes for the future. The project is no different – last year proved a special year in that we managed to put The Debenham Project “on the map” as something that is really helping carers of those with dementia and those they care for. This next year we will continue to grow and develop so that we will be able to show the County that community projects such as ours really do make a difference.

Early in the year we will, working with the Suffolk Mental Health Partnerships Trust, be setting up a regular and local specialist dementia and mci* clinic for those who are seeking medical advice, diagnosis and follow up support. Whilst it may still be necessary for patients to visit Ipswich hospital for some tests we hope that almost all consultations can be conducted in Debenham. Moreover, it is the aim of the clinic to bring together both the clinical and social care aspects so that they can be conducted in a much more familiar and social atmosphere, and where members of the team will be accessible to answer questions and give advice and support on any concerns. This is a big step forward both in terms of removing the need to travel to Ipswich or Stowmarket, but also in the way it is creating a team approach focused on the carer / cared-for.

Our Education and Awareness programme resumes on the 13th of January 2011 when Dr. Rob Butler of the Suffolk Mental Health Team together with a rescheduled Alan Reynolds will be our speakers. Please watch out for the posters and invite anyone that you might feel would be interested – as usual, tea and coffee will be available.

We are also so grateful for the private donations which show how much,

within our community, people want to help with the project. Especial thanks are due to the W.I. who have invited me to represent the project at their Christmas party (postponed until early this month due to the bad weather) and to accept a most generous donation towards our work.

As always, thanks to all in Debenham, the surrounding villages, the local authorities, and our partners for all their support.

If you would like to know more please see our display in the Post Office, ring 01728862003, call in at the Library Resource Centre or visit www.the-debenham-project.org.uk where you can access all our newsletters, and much more.

With best wishes and kind regards

Lynden

*mci: mild cognitive impairment