



Hello. I guess everyone is now looking forward to Spring and getting out in the garden – so many plants are shooting up and the daffodils this year seem to be putting on a special show. It is a time for new ideas and new enthusiasm.

The Dementia and Memory Clinic started at the beginning of March. We believe that this will make a big difference to carers, and those they care for, who are going through a very emotional and stressful period. By providing a local and familiar setting with a friendly and social atmosphere we can show that there is care and support here for them when they need it and that there will always be someone to talk to, advise them, and put them in touch with the “right” person – a helping hand. The first clinic was very successful. The bringing together of the health and social care aspects with the voluntary support looks like it will really work well. So much so, that following the next clinic in May, we shall be holding them every month thereafter.

This last month saw the last of our Autumn and Spring programme of education and awareness meetings. Two excellent talks – Kevin Wegg who is “Mr. Telecare” for the County, showed just how much easy-to-use reasonably-priced technology is available to help carers and cared-for manage in their own homes – Dr. Paddy Fielder gave us his insight into the way the NHS changes will affect us all. Many thanks are due to all of our 12 speakers who, over the 6 evenings gladly gave their time. And special thanks to Joan Read and Doreen Balaam for our refreshments

Also in March, we held the first of our “special” Carers’ Club afternoons where apart from the usual tea, chocolate cake, and chat, we had both a screening of archive films of Suffolk, and the services of a professional reflexologist (it was so successful that we hope that both will become regular features of our activities. Thank you Pam Harling-Challis, and thank you Jean Parnell.

Finally one more piece of good news – the project has been given an award of £7,000 from the Mental Health Capital Bid (Suffolk County Council) to help us improve the “back office” equipment and the facilities in Dove Cottage. I know infrastructure doesn’t always catch the imagination but it is nonetheless important that we are not struggling to cope. Getting money for these things in the voluntary sector is never easy and there are usually strings attached but

it shows that the local authorities are prepared to give support to projects such as ours, even in these difficult times.

As always, thanks to all in Debenham, the surrounding villages, the local authorities, and our partners for all their support. We have continued to receive private donations towards the work of the project. It is difficult to report each one as they deserve but, make no mistake, each has a value far in excess of the "figure on the cheque". Each shows us the care that the giver feels for those whom the project seeks to help – thank you.

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](http://www.the-debenham-project.org.uk) where you can access all our newsletters, and much more.

With best wishes and kind regards

Lynden