



Hello everyone,

Over five years ago family carers (husbands, wives, partners, friends and neighbours) highlighted the unending stress and exhaustion of caring for someone with dementia. Honesty says that there is no way that the NHS and the Social Services can “take that away”. So how can we (you and I) help to make their load “a little easier” and reduce the pressure and stress by “just a bit”? We have, since 2009, tried to provide a range of local and friendly occasions, activities and services such that other communities see us a model of good practice – The Debenham Project is just an example of what local people can achieve. However, tackling the problems that are presented by dementia is not a matter of “what we have done so far” but how we evolve and respond to the future needs of those who are struggling to cope with “the stress and exhaustion” of their roles. Make no mistake, somehow family carers do keep going despite everything, because they love the person they care for, but with some support their quality of life (and that of the person they care for) can be better. One new way that we believe can help is relaxation therapy. By learning and practicing techniques which have been shown to reduce stress and to calm, it is hoped that, when needed they will be able to clear out the emotional frustration and exhaustion being felt and, for a while, find a little peace of mind – a time purely for themselves. Therefore, following a positive “taster” session, we have started a small group led by Margaret Samain meeting fortnightly to explore the benefits. If there is anyone who feels that they might like to join in, please let me know.

Another service we have started is a register of professional organisations, agencies and individuals who offer personal care and domestic help in and around Debenham - an informal local network. So if you need some help please ask. Although we do not “recommend” or “guarantee” their services, they are not just “pulled out of the hat”, and when it comes to those providing personal care we do try to make sure that they are CRB checked. As time goes by it will become more comprehensive. Do please remember that a recommendation from a trusted friend is one of the best ways of finding someone. Also, if you are someone who would like to be included in the register please contact me.

Finally, a big, big thank you to Ruth at Websters and all her book-loving customers. She has made a very generous donation of £500 towards the work of The Debenham Project from the donations for second books.

Best wishes, Lynden Phone 01728 862003 Website: [www.the-debenham-project.org.uk](http://www.the-debenham-project.org.uk)

P.S. If you need to borrow our wheelchair, don't hesitate to ask.