



Hello everyone,

As I write this month's article on mid-summer's day looking out of the window at the pouring rain, I sincerely hope that we will soon be enjoying the long sunny days that give our spirits such a boost. And, of course, I'm sure we all notice what a difference the weather can have not only on our emotions but also on our physical health. We smile, laugh, and greet each other more, and the aches and pains are less in intensity. Health and care professionals and academics call this effect "well-being" and much has been written about its importance in both our overall mental and physical health, and on our ability to enjoy life despite our frailties. Actually, investment in helping older people to enhance their "well-being" will probably be the most important factor in reducing the demands on A&E departments and the NHS generally.

You may ask "how can we make a positive difference in the well-being of those families who are struggling to cope with the impact of dementia on their lives"? Whilst we try to offer through our groups and activities, easy access to good advice and information, people to talk to, respite and support, etc. by far the most important thing is regular social interaction and occasions to look forward to – "themed" laughter, companionship and friends, all heavily lubricated with chocolate cake! There is no doubt that, like sunshine, well-being thrives in these situations. And, although it may be difficult to measure, well-being automatically leads to fewer crises, A&E visits, hospitalisation admissions, etc. It can't be bad!

It is always a pleasure for me to say thank you for all the donations that support our work. Firstly, an enormous thank you to Roz Brooks who successfully completed her sponsored ride from Land's End to John O'Groats and in doing raised almost £2,500 to be shared between Norwich Mind, and The Debenham Project. Additionally, we were delighted to learn that The Yorkshire Building Society is donating £500 as a result of their customers in Ipswich voting for their favourite community charity. We have also received gifts through our Co-op charity membership. Such donations are vital to the continued survival of the project – thank you.

However, at this time of year we can also say a big "thank you" to everyone who volunteers, participates, and freely give their practical support at our Garden Party. Each year since the very beginning of the project Lyn and Mike Rouse have very generously hosted this lovely occasion – I know we are all looking forward to it and are so grateful.

Finally, with those long summer evenings in mind, you might like to think about borrowing one of our wheelchairs and inviting someone – mum, dad, husband, wife, partner, neighbour – who can't walk any distance without discomfort, to join you in a stroll around the village and our country lanes. The lake is especially lovely and for many older residents unknown!

Best wishes, Lynden

Phone: 01728 862003

Website: www.the-debenham-project.org.uk