



Hello everyone,

August is generally a quieter month for The Debenham Project, what with many volunteers and participants on holiday. Some of our groups are taking a break, but others like the Carers Club and Info Café, and Food 'n' Friends lunches are carrying on as usual. However, it does give me an opportunity to mention some bits and pieces of administration which are essential to the smooth running of the project, but largely go unnoticed.

One such item is our database which details everyone who plays a part as a participant, family carer, cared for, volunteer, professional, donor, professional contact, etc. Apart from containing contact details and facilitating good communications, it can also tell us the size and structure of the various groups and activities, who is participating in them, the ratios of participants and volunteers, and what the volunteers' roles, skills and preferences are. Currently it shows that we have:

- 12 groups and other activities.
- 93 carers, those they care for, and others who participate in our various clubs, activities and services.
- 59 volunteers who give their time on a regular basis together with an additional significant number of others who are happy to help on an occasional basis.
- 14 regular or periodic individual financial donors, plus a substantial number of local businesses and organisations who have generously supported the project.

All in all, with local professional support, it amounts to a total which is rapidly approaching 200 people who are all instrumental in maintaining The Debenham Project as one of the leading community-based care projects in Suffolk. When we add the network of our contacts in local and national government, the NHS, the charities, universities, the media, etc. it is clear that, over the years, the database's size and complexity has grown with the development of the project. You can imagine that it is essential that it is kept up to date. It is no exaggeration that, without it, the project would rapidly become unmanageable – "It is a serious bit of kit".

Other "serious bits of kit" are the annual and management accounts. Hopefully, I will try to provide a little insight into their importance next month – and thank our treasurer, Roger Cockerton, for his key contribution to the success of The Debenham Project.

Finally, no community-based project can succeed without the wholehearted support of its residents, and a critical element lies in helping us to "meet the bills". I am continually humbled by individuals and organisations who, unasked and unexpected, privately come forward with a donation – "please put this in your back pocket for the project, no need to say who it is from". This month I am delighted to thank the East of England Coop for its generous donation of £500 as a result of its "green token" scheme in our area. There have also been several private donations for which we are so grateful.

Best wishes, Lynden
Phone: 01728 862003 Website: www.the-debenham-project.org.uk