



Hello everyone,

Nobody told me I would become a community worker. The Debenham Project has, over the years, become recognised well beyond the borders of Suffolk as an example of best practice in community-based dementia support and quoted by national professional organisations such as The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE), and The Royal College of Psychiatry (RC Psych). Generally, our contribution has been in the form a “case study” or an “exemplar” in the provision of dementia support. However, a couple of weeks ago I was contacted by Alan Twelvetrees, the author of “Community Work”, one of the standard (and bestselling) textbooks for the study of social work and community development, and asked if I might contribute to the 6<sup>th</sup> edition. It seems that, without intending to, we may have something useful to teach the next generation of social care professionals about sustainable community-based support projects. I must admit that it will be a challenge but I hope something will come out of it that will encourage professionals to see community project development from a different perspective.

A couple of weeks ago Pippa Kelly, a well-known blogger and podcaster on dementia, arranged to record an interview with me last week about The Debenham Project. Well, she rang to apologise profusely and ask if we could put it off for a week as she had the opportunity to interview Glenda Jackson. What could I say? “Of course, no problem, happy to oblige”. Not everyone can say that they have been “bumped” by Glenda! And not everyone can say they are appearing on the same bill as Glenda! Hey-Ho, is there such a thing as “celebrity status by association”? But seriously, it will be special to listen to her interview. The actress and former Labour government minister, revealed that her experiences of visiting the elderly during her political career helped inspire her to play Maud who has Alzheimer’s in the BAFTA winning [BBC One drama Elizabeth is Missing](#), last November, her first return to television in 25 years. She is a major campaigner for better awareness and support for those living with the illness.

Finally, you can access all of our on-line help by visiting our new “[On-Line Resources](#)” page. So far we have developed resources for seated exercise, relaxation, mindfulness, singalong, and nature. They can all be enjoyed at home with your family or on your own – they really can make a long term difference in how you feel if you can make them part of your weekly routine. Meanwhile, Steve Robbins has been working on “Way Back When At Home” and, to start, has produced a number of memory boxes. Each box is filled with those nostalgic items that the moment you pick them out you are transported straight back to the time when they were every-day objects. And, in the Debenham Project way, I am sure he will be thinking up other ways of enjoying reminiscing with each other over the coming months.

You can find our "Coronavirus - Local Information and Support" list on our [News and Project Progress page](#).

With all my best wishes,

Lynden

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