



Newsletter – January 4th 2011

Dear everyone, Christmas has been celebrated and it is now time to look forward. New Year has always been the time for each of us to take stock of what has been achieved and to think about our hopes for the future. The project is no different – last year we managed to put The Debenham Project “on the map” as something that is really helping carers of those with dementia and those they care for. It has showed that with goodwill, practical kindness, and a “little bit of effort” a lot can be achieved. This next year we will continue to grow and develop so that we will be able to show the County that community projects such as ours really do make a difference. Caring is what it is all about and the Christmas season shows that although everyone seems to be busy preparing for their own festivities many want to give time to others.

Our three Lunch Clubs all held their Christmas meals, – these Food ‘n’ Friends lunch clubs have made such a difference to both carers and cared-for and we are so very grateful to our hosts. A group of our carers and those they care for had a wonderful time at Julia Dawson’s Xmas Party (sponsored by The Alzheimer’s Society) at Needham Market. The Carers’ Club and Info Café put on a “riotous” seasonal tea party. Finally, Cameo (Activities and Social sessions) also had a great time with their Christmas afternoon of “fun and food”.

If you ever want to find out just how important the project is, help us out next Christmas – No! - Drop in at any time!

Each month usually brings something new and this is no exception. Suffolk Libraries have long been a valued partner to the project through the support they give through Melanie Woods and the Library Resource Centre. Furthermore, they have organized a “trip down memory lane” to Brockford Railway Museum this month and also they have offered us free use of some their archive dvds (films) to show at our Carers’ Club in March. Very many thanks.

Education and Awareness. The first session of our spring programme is on January 13th 2011 – 7.30 pm Dove Cottage, High Street, Debenham. We have a special event – a double bill – in which two of the key people leading Suffolk’s efforts to tackle the problem of dementia are giving talks. Firstly, **Alan Reynolds (Area Manager, Adult and Community Services for Suffolk County Council)**. Alan has and continues to be a great “friend” and supporter of the project; he will be talking about how the County is responding to the ever growing numbers of those with dementia – especially difficult in the present financial conditions. He will be joined by **Dr. Rob Butler of the Suffolk Mental Health Partnerships Trust**. Rob is a key member of the team who have

planned, and are implementing, the efforts to tackle the increasing problem that dementia presents to Suffolk. **Please do try to come along – everyone is welcome – and it is important that we show how much we value their help.** Watch out for the posters and invite anyone that you might feel would be interested – as ever, tea and coffee will be available

As I reported last month, beginning on February 8th in Debenham there will be a specialist clinic concerned with dementia and mild cognitive impairment. This will run bimonthly and, in time, offer a comprehensive approach to both the clinical and carer support aspects. It is intended to be based around a multi-disciplinary team including consultants, a community MH Nurse, a GP, charity support worker, trained volunteer support advisors, etc. Of course, not everyone will be there “on the day” but they will all be “on call” when needed. It should become a valuable care facility reducing the need for carers and patients to travel 10 miles or more and providing a single and central point of contact and advice for carers. For more details see last month’s newsletter. This initiative is important in its own right but it also demonstrates how valuable “partnership” can be – this is The Debenham Project, Suffolk Mental Health Partnerships Trust, Age UK, The Alzheimer’s Society, and Debenham Group GP Practice all working together.

As we move into 2011 we will surely continue to develop. The progress to date has been built on the wonderful support of all in our community. So we want to introduce a “Fun and Fundraising” side to the project. The annual Summer Garden Parties have proved a great success, as did the Tea Dance and the Tawny’s Barn Concert. However, we believe that it would be excellent if we could build on these with a few more functions. Perhaps there are a few people who would like to help and “get things off the ground” – just let me know.

Thinking ahead, the newsletter will come out every two months in the future – the Parish Magazine contributions will continue on a monthly basis.

As always, thanks to all in Debenham, the surrounding villages, the local authorities, and our partners for all their support.

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 where you can access all our newsletters, and much more.

With best wishes, kind regards, and a very Happy New Year

Lynden