



Newsletter – 12th September 2013

In this edition:

- 1. A Very Brief Recap!**“sometimes amazed to realize the extent of everything that goes on”
- 2. In The Background!**“but it still takes substantial effort”
- 3. Grants And Donations!**“they should not have to also reach into their own purses and pockets

Hello everyone,

They call August the “silly season” when newspaper editors resort to trivia and bizarre stories to fill their papers. Traditionally, it is a quiet period for real news when Parliament is not sitting and everyone is on holiday – or so it seems. However, as far as The Debenham project is concerned, it is business as usual for all our activities, and new people continue to seek a bit of help and support. On the other hand, when I sat down to write this letter I did wonder what I should write about – usually there are several topics that stand out concerning new developments, publicity, achievements, etc. – but surprisingly not so this time. So this will be more a bit of a reminder of all the goodwill and effort that everyone provides all year round, and the care and support it goes towards providing.

1. A Very Brief Recap! A great measure of the success of the project is that we all just “get on and do our bit” and so it has become accepted as part of our regular pattern of life. Perhaps though, we need an occasional reminder of how special each and everyone’s contributions are – volunteers, participants, professionals, support workers, etc. I am often asked to give presentations about The Debenham Project and sometimes amazed to realize the full extent of everything that goes on. So it would not surprise me if many of those who are participating or volunteering in individual elements of the project are not fully aware of how much there is in the project of which they are a part. So, here is a very brief review.

Since our very early days the Project has continued to evolve so that now we have provided or arranged a very wide range of help and support within the community:

Advice and information
Signposting to professional services
Confidential telephone helpline
Carers Club and Info Café
CAMEO activities and social afternoons
Lunch Clubs
Debenham on Call emergency respite support
Carers Co-op professional carers
Volunteer transport
Liaison with professional agencies
Dementia awareness
Professional and voluntary carer training

Clinical support
Fit Club exercise therapy
Research

This has all been achieved due entirely to the tremendous goodwill and freely given support of not only our volunteers, but also of all those professional organisations – the local authorities, the NHS, the charities, and the support agencies – together with local groups, donors, and the community at large.

2. In The Background! However, there is also another story, which is about what goes on in the background. In the early days of The Debenham Project, the previous Chief Executive of Suffolk County Council remarked that we were “very lean”. I replied that, speaking personally, I was not sure that my figure would agree, but I knew what she meant – nearly all of our effort is directly involved with “getting on and doing things” and the management overhead of the Project is minimal compared to most organisations. Nevertheless, looking after The Debenham Project may be much less formal and consuming than usual, but it still takes substantial effort, time and dedication. So I would like to take this opportunity to highlight and thank those volunteers who keep the Project running (reasonably!) smoothly, and without whom, I assure you, I would be totally lost. “The Background Team”:

Sue Jackson has taken on the role of my PA. She keeps the Project on track, makes sure everything gets done, and is a fund of good advice and commonsense.

Roger Cockerton is our Treasurer and not only manages the finances and the accounts but also keeps the Charity Commission happy.

Mary Morley is our Project Secretary and looks after organizing meetings and occasions, distributing information, recording and preparing minutes, etc.

Sam Cage and Stephanie Tompkins share the key role of Carers Liaison – maintaining contact with all our family carers and keeping them up to date by e-mail, post, telephone.

Chris Bishop is our Webmaster. He developed and now maintains our website and is routinely updating the contents and pages.

Gillian Shacklock, Mike Rouse, Paddy Fielder, and Roger Cockerton are our Trustees. They provide invaluable advice and consultation, guidance and governance.

Finally, the above together with Joy Walton, Richard Blackwell, Peter Holme, and Alison Gravatt comprise the Project’s steering group - monitoring and advising from their own perspectives.

However, most of the members of “The Background Team” are also very active in organizing and helping with one or more of the Project’s frontline activities and services.

Without this small group the Project could not exist. So, on behalf of us all, I wish to express our many and grateful thanks. The evidence of their value lies in the recognition of The Debenham Project as a pioneer in the provision of community-based dementia care.

3. Grants And Donations! I would also like to express our gratitude to AXA Insurance

for their grant of £630 towards our volunteers' travel expenses. Everyone generously gives up their time in support of our various activities and services and they should not have to also reach into their own purses and pockets to cover things like mileage, train journeys, and other expenses. So with this grant we have set up a maintained fund to ensure that they never have to do so.

Finally, I want to sign off by with special thanks for two very generous donations. The first was for the £550 that we received in memory of Freda Harvey, who was a longstanding member of CAMEO, by her family and friends – someone who we really miss for her ready smile, chuckle, and kind words. The other, equally unlooked for and unexpected but so welcome – a donation of over £360 from the Corinthian Lodge as their chosen charity on the occasion of their Ladies Evening – thank you so much.

If you would like to know more about our work and services please see our display in the Post Office, ring 01728862003, call in at the Library Resource Centre, or visit our website at <http://www.the-debenham-project.org.uk/>. Past newsletters are archived on the website.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynden Jackson', written in a cursive style.

With my very best wishes

Lynden Jackson (Chairman)