



**Dedicated to giving practical and emotional support to all in the Debenham area who care for those with dementia.**

16 July 2010

## Summary

The Debenham project was launched in October 2009 to provide a range of local services dedicated to the support of carers of those with dementia, and those they care for. It has already demonstrated in 2010 that a community-led project can “take the lead” in implementing the national and county dementia strategies. Looking towards 2020 the project intends to show that caring for all elderly frail people in a rural environment can be most successfully achieved by an integration of all elements of social and health care at the local level. The “Vision of Caring” is a proposed person-centred community-owned scheme which is designed to meet the needs of the elderly no matter the nature of their frailty. By the year 2020 we believe frailty should no longer be a reason for anyone having to leave their home and community.

## Synopsis

### **The Debenham Project**

The project was initiated in April 2009 and launched with its first services in October of the same year. It is dedicated to providing practical and emotional support for carers of those who have dementia, and those they care for. It is estimated that there are between 70 and 100 people with the illness in Debenham and the surrounding area to a radius of 4 miles. It is community owned and led and is providing a range of services which include: a confidential telephone support line, an information and advice centre, activities and social support sessions, Food 'n' Friends luncheon clubs, a website, medication management, a carers' club and info cafe, and help with “getting a break”. Some 50 volunteers are already directly contributing to the work. A further 30 have offered their support as the project continues to grow. The emphasis lies in enabling carers to access quality services provided locally on a voluntary basis and, in partnership, drawing in the professional capability of the local authorities, The NHS, and the major charities.

Alongside these day to day objectives the project has developed a “Vision of Caring” - a new approach to the care of all elderly frail members of the community. Domiciliary, day, community, very sheltered, and high dependency (secure, respite, residential, nursing, etc) care all part of an integrated health and social care scheme. The model, similar in philosophy, to the Swedish Way, is person-centred and focuses on matching locally provided services to the individual person's particular needs for support as they become older and, generally, more frail. It is argued that not only can such a scheme offer significant improvements to their quality of care and social

wellbeing, but can also provide important cost savings within the NHS and Adult Care sectors – truly a win-win situation.

The project's vision of "2020" is one in which the local community takes the lead and the responsibility for how the elderly are cared for and helped to remain an important and integral part of our lives, and how those who care for them are supported in that role.

The Project is working with Age Concern, Alzheimer's Society, CAMEO, Debenham GP Surgery, Debenham Pharmacy, Debenham Post Office, St. Mary's Church, Sanctuary Housing Association, Suffolk County Council, Mid Suffolk District Council, Suffolk Family Carers, Suffolk Libraries, Suffolk Mental Health Partnerships NHS Trust, Suffolk NHS Primary Care Trust, and many others. For further information go to [www.the-debenham-project.org.uk](http://www.the-debenham-project.org.uk).

## Biography

**Eur. Ing. L.A.Jackson Bsc(Hon), DMS, PGCE, CEng, FIEE, FBCS [Rtrd]**

Lynden Jackson graduated in electrical engineering at University College London and spent a long career with BT in electronics, optical fibre and computer software engineering research; developing, leading and managing national and international cooperative research. Upon retiring he trained as a secondary teacher. He was a volunteer for ten years at St Clement's Hospital in the patient's social centre and chaplaincy where he was involved, particularly, with elderly patients who had spent much of their lives in a mental hospital. He is the current chairman of the charity and also leads on the provision of an information and advice centre. Lynden, supported by his wife Sue, was the primary carer for his mother, who had dementia, until she had to go into residential care.