



Hello everyone,

Each month, especially at this time of year, brings fresh thoughts and ideas and the prospect of new growth and new directions. However, these have to be balanced with the importance of not outgrowing our strength. I am very much aware that we must continue to do what we are doing well and not to try to do everything - We could easily spread ourselves too thin. The evidence that what we do is valued and is of a high quality lies in the fact that the lunch clubs, CAMEO, Carers Club & Info Café, Fit Club, etc are right up there close to full capacity of about 200 person sessions per month. It is also an indication that "The Social Care Institute for Excellence" (a leading national health & social care organisation) will be including The Debenham Project as an example of what is best practice in its forthcoming guide on home (and community) care for older people. This shows that whether we are judged by those inside the project we seek to help, or by the professional world outside, our work is valued. So we must make sure that we set our priorities for the future such that we maintain our ability to provide support when it is needed. For the time being that means "keeping going" whilst trying to maximize the number of families that we are able to help.

Of course that doesn't mean that the project will not continue to evolve and develop. We shall be supporting the Parish Council in its role in leading our "Dementia Friendly Community" initiative with this year's objective of a "Dementia - be aware - be positive" campaign to further raise the understanding and awareness of the illness throughout our community. The focus will be on our shops and businesses but, also very importantly, on encouraging our High School students to learn about the impact that dementia will have on their future.

As you all know, I always try to thank everyone who generously gives "a little or a lot" to support our work. It is so important in these times of shortage, to explore all sorts of ways to help you to make a difference, without it becoming more than "a little bit now and again". If you are a member of our local Co-op you can now donate your "divvy" to the project. You simply use your membership card as normal but ask for the dividend to be given to The Debenham Project – Number **609313**. To always have the number at hand please affix a sticker with it onto your card. Thank you.

Finally, it is with deep sadness that I mention that Pauline de Courcy died a couple of weeks ago. She was one of our very first volunteers, not only giving her time on the Telephone Support Line to support family carers in need of a "listening ear", but also always intensely interested in what was going on elsewhere in the project. We miss her. Our thoughts are with her family – Claire and John – and all her friends.

With best wishes,

Lynden

Phone 01728 862003 or visit our **Website:** www.the-debenham-project.org.uk