



**Minutes of a Joint Meeting of The Steering Group and Trustees**  
**Of**  
**The Debenham Project.**

A joint meeting was held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at 7.30pm. in Dove Cottage.

1. **Attendance and Apologies.**

Present: Paddy Fielder (Chairperson), Lynden Jackson, Mary Morley, Joy Walton, Sue Jackson, Richard Blackwell, Roger Cockerton, Chris Bishop, Steve Robbins, Mike Rouse, Gillian Shacklock and Peter Holme.

Apologies: Alison Gravatt has resigned from The Steering Group. Lynden reported that he was sorry that that she was leaving and understood and that she was still very much committed to the Project but felt that she had not been significantly involved recently and could not contribute as she would like to. Lynden had written to her expressing our sincere thanks for all she had done, particularly as one of the founding members.

Mary apologised for her late arrival. (This was accepted as unnecessary by acclamation).

2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting.**

Paddy opened the meeting.

There was one matter arising from the minutes of the last meeting: -

High School involvement with the Project. It will not be possible for Thomas Mills High School to be actively involved with The Debenham Project.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

3. **Matters arising from previous meetings that are not covered by the agenda.**

None.

4. **Report and Accounts for 2017/18**

Roger presented the accounts and expanded on the figures contained in the report.

A considerable saving on expenses had been achieved by changing the insurance provider. Lynden reported that there had not been any applications for grant aid during the financial year as sufficient income had been received from voluntary donations and bequests. This was because our financial position is sound. However, we may consider applying to Sports or Comic Relief this coming year as they have, in the past, supported the project with funds for our on-going expenses.

The Trustees and Steering Committee were happy with the financial statement and Paddy thanked Roger for all his hard work.

The Trustees' Annual Report for 2017-18 was accepted and Lynden thanked the trustees for all their support and help. There followed a discussion as to whether we should write to The Charity Commission regarding the points (particularly about the resistance of local authorities and other statutory authorities towards longer term financial engagements with community-based support charities) expressed in the Trustees' Report. It was agreed that this should be considered and Lynden and Roger agreed to liaise regarding a letter to the Commission.

5. **Current Financial Position and Funding Prospects.**

The current financial position is very good. There is £4,000 in the current account and net assets of £21,000

Lynden may apply for another grant from Comic Relief this year as they are one of the few organisations which does not stipulate that the money must be for a specific project. It might be considered that The Project already has sufficient funds so it could be advantageous to spend some of the current assets. Item 9 on the agenda was to discuss this further.

Mary reported that at a recent meeting she had attended it had been proposed that Christmas cards be made from images of the Village Advent Windows and sold in aid of The Debenham Project. The meeting expressed its gratitude for such support.

## 6. Policy Updates.

There are nine policies published on the website. Some revision of these has now taken place off-line and Lynden will update them on the website. Agreed.

There is not a Complaints Policy in place at the moment and, although there have not been any complaints to date, it was agreed that it would be prudent to develop one.

Roger suggested that the date when a policy had last been reviewed and by whom should be added at the end of each policy. Agreed.

## 7. Current Activities and Recent Developments.

- a. Fit Club. Sue reported that there is still a full house and a waiting list. The group meets weekly with participants ranging in age from their mid-sixties to mid- nineties.  
Debenham High School has again invited the group to their Diversity Lunch which is always an excellent event.
- b. Carers Club and Info Café. These are both thriving with 47 attendees spread over the session period on one afternoon. Two of the original members are now living in a residential care home and two have deceased and there are eight new members. There are also two new volunteers and a D of E volunteer who is an excellent baker! A wonderful Christmas party had been enjoyed by all who attended.
- c. Way Back When. Steve reported that this group is “jogging along nicely” and will have been in existence for three years in April. There are usually about eight attendees which is a good number as it gives everyone a chance to talk and be involved. Guest speakers come to talk about topics of interest which have included Remembrance Day, Farming, Pearly Kings and The School Day. A new poster is being produced to advertise these sessions and similar flyers will be distributed to other clubs.
- d. Lunch Clubs. Joy reported that these are all running well. The club at 6 Cross Green has four guests and three volunteers. This is a good friendship group and they are keen to visit places outside the village. Kate and Janice’s group has had a couple of new members recently.

Age UK used to be the umbrella organisation providing training and support for the lunch clubs but this service has now been withdrawn. This is not seen as a

problem as The Project can now organise any of the necessary training and checks.

The Hut at Felixstowe has been booked for Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> August this year.

Joy suggested that it might be a good idea to provide a post-Christmas lunch and entertainment as this time can be very quiet and lonely for people. Sue commented that she had been asked if there was anyone who might like to be invited to a Christmas Day lunch (NB Each year Sue goes through the list of the Project's participants (and several more!) to see if there is anyone who would be on their own) but no one had been identified. However, the meeting agreed that the post-Christmas week was certainly a quiet period and a luncheon between Christmas and New Year should be positively considered. (Lynden will discuss with Joy).

- e. Cameo. Peter reported that this activity is still going strong. They have not been to the pantomime for the last two years as it has proved difficult to get participants to commit to events in the future which require advance booking and there have also been difficulties with mobility. The group have gone out for a meal instead and they also enjoy going out to a pub. At Christmas and Easter Audrey Hart comes and makes seasonal flower decorations which is a popular activity. There are currently sixteen members on the Cameo books with four helpers. Peter thanked The Debenham Project for the support provided to Cameo.
- f. Summer Garden Party. Paddy thanked Mike and Lynn once again for their generosity and another wonderful garden party when the weather had again been favourable. Mike and Lynn have kindly offered to host this event again on 29<sup>th</sup> June and we all extend our sincere thanks to them for this. It is a very special event for all involved.
- g. Music Group. It has not been possible to start this group yet due to the personal circumstances of the volunteer organiser, Kate Scott.
- h. Information and Advice Service. This service is continuing, referring enquirers to professional services such as Dementia Together or to volunteers with the necessary experience to be able to help.
- i. Transport. This service is very busy with an increased number of trips on last year's figure. Some of the trips made have been as far as to Addenbrooke's hospital in Cambridge and Colchester Hospital. There are three new drivers and Lynden tries to ask a driver to make a journey not more frequently than once every ten or fourteen days.

- j. Recent developments. One-to-One seems to be going well although two people have dropped out as they did not feel comfortable with their position. Two new people have now joined who should be an excellent addition. Recipients of the One-to-One service are very appreciative.

The Please Tell Me and Please Tell Me More booklets are going down very well and one care home has ordered thirty copies.

Dementia Together continues well.

## 8. Project Identity and External Image.

- a) Posters. The new posters can be seen around the village. They are lighter and brighter than previously with a more modern look. This approach has been carried through to the booklet and website too.
- b) 4<sup>th</sup> Edition Booklet. Lynden expressed his thanks to Richard and his team for all their hard work on the updated booklet. The 500 printed have nearly all been distributed. Debenham Surgery, Hartismere Hospital and Dementia Together are some of the organisations which regularly request copies of the booklet.
- c) Website. Chris has been updating the website based on the new booklet and ran through some of the features on screen. It is much easier to manage now. The updated policies will be added and a link to the archive will be made. It was suggested that a Deed of Covenant also be added and perhaps copies of the leaflets too. Chris will continue to work on this with Sarah Carruthers and Lynden and let us know when it goes live.

## 9. Celebrating 10 Years.

Lynden had distributed some suggestions for ways of celebrating the tenth anniversary of the existence of The Debenham Project

1. A university-based research project
2. A public event along the lines of the original launch in October 2009
3. A campaign to make Suffolk not only dementia friendly but "Dementia Pro-active"
4. A sponsored local professional care service that works

5. A study to establish the true level and quality of Health, Social, Housing, Community, and Voluntary Care being offered to those living with dementia in our catchment area - a typical rural community
6. An academic conference presenting best practice in community-based care

and invited further suggestions.

Paddy suggested that ideas 1 and 5 could be combined and perhaps be carried out by a PhD or Masters student in conjunction with a local University. Mary suggested that it might be something in which The Open University would be interested.

There were doubts shown about whether a conference (suggestion 6) is a very productive forum. Accepted.

Peter suggested that, as many of the attendees to Cameo suffer deafness, a hearing loop for the cottage might be a suitable purchase that would be a lasting way to mark the anniversary. The meeting expressed positive support for this suggestion.

It was noted that the anniversary could be marked in more than one way. Making sure that there was a celebration was felt to be important and that the media should be involved. Agreed.

## **10. Public Relations, Presentations and Discussions.**

Lynden reported on various activities concerned with providing advice to decision makers in the NHS and Local Authority, promoting awareness, sharing our experiences with other communities (locally and nationally), and advertising the support we seek to provide.

- a. Dementia Forum: This broadly based “expert” group is drawn from those organisations which are directly supporting those living with dementia and also includes key NHS and local authority commissioners. The Debenham Project has contributed with a Case Study based upon the experiences of our project.
- b. Dementia Friendly Communities: Debenham continues to be recognised as a leading example, although the way this has been achieved and managed predates the DFC initiative and does not strictly adhere to the standard proforma of the Alzheimer’s Society. On a practical level all our local

businesses are aware of the need to support customers who are living with dementia, and support The Debenham Project by displaying widow stickers, organising and/or participating in fund raising events, and prominently hosting collecting boxes in their premises.

- c. Seckford Trust (Woodbridge): They approached us with a view to setting up something based upon the model of The Debenham Project and seeking our advice. Lynden met with them, shared our experience, and has offered to help in any way we can.
- d. “Evaluation (sic): Knowledge for a Caring Society” event - 12th April, Swansea: We have been invited, and accepted, an invitation to contribute to a conference organized by Swansea University (Paddy and Lynden will attend) – Expenses will be covered by the organisers.
- e. Patient Information and support event – March 29<sup>th</sup>, Otley: We have been invited, and agreed, to support a local event. It will involve setting up a display and describing what we offer and do to support patients and their carers.

### **11. Any Other Business.**

Paddy learnt at a carers meeting in Ipswich that the SCC (Suffolk County Council) planned to reduce the funding to CAB (Citizens Advice Bureau) over the next two financial years and then stop it altogether. This had predictably induced a great deal of protest, not only from the CAB but amongst many others. The organisation deals with a wide range of problems, both financial and social and indeed, government forms encourage people to use their services.

Following the SCC’s decision to impose this, the Clinical Commissioning Groups in Suffolk have agreed to step in and support them, at least for the next two years. They are aware of the beneficial impact that the CAB has for those with mental illness. This, however, is not a long term solution.

The SCC withdrawal of funding to Age UK Suffolk is causing substantial impact on their ability to provide services for the elderly, including dementia support.

Joy informed the meeting that The Parish Council have made a Community Emergency Plan and as part of this The Welfare Group, of which she is a member, have produced a flyer.

Joy read a draft copy of the leaflet which will be printed soon and then distributed in the village.

Paddy thanked Lynden and Sue for all their continued hard work and for being the driving force behind The Project.

Paddy closed the meeting at 9.20pm.