



Minutes for Combined Trustees and Steering Group Meeting

Dove Cottage, 7.30 pm, 13th February 2025

Present: Lynden Jackson, Paddy Fielder, Mike Rouse, Sue Jackson, Carol Garrett, Richard Blackwell, Joy Walton, Caroline Manning, Chris Bishop, Steve Chappell and Sally Holmes.

1. Welcome and apologies

- Apologies were given from Tammy King and Roger Cockerton

2. Previous Minutes (17th October 2024)

- Minutes were approved.

3. Chairman's report and update

- Transport is very busy, very popular and helps a lot of people. 31 people had lifts last month.
- Addressing resilience, Sally Holmes joining and helping with Admin has helped.
- Suffolk CC and the NHS fund a service that looks after Dementia care in the area. This has recently come up to re let and has been awarded to the national charity Shaftesbury but will be managed entirely locally and run by Jo Marshal. Possible name Suffolk Dementia Support Services. This is good news for The Project as Jo and her team are known to Lynden and have asked him and Fiona Palmer (Stowmarket Dementia Community Group) to monitor and advise them. The handover from the current contractor (Alzheimer's Society) will take place in April. Apparently, there are over 500 referrals waiting to be sorted.

4. Activity Leaders' report of Project activity and progress since last meeting

i. Carers Club

An afternoon with tea and cakes for carers and those they care for to chat, and also have the opportunity to talk and to seek help and advice from Project volunteers. Run by Sue Jackson. Carers Club is very popular and is going from strength to strength. They have an average of 30 people each week, maximum is 35. Had 2 new people last time.

ii. Fit Club

Chair-based exercises for improving mobility, coordination, and general fitness. Run by Sue Jackson. Club works weekly and has an average of 17, the maximum is 23 there are 2 waiting to join. It is led by professional instructors who are very supportive. The members thoroughly enjoy themselves and take charge of refreshments, serving, and help to clear up after sessions.

iii. TLC - Carer Support Group

TLC offers support to carers in the form of peer support and signposting to other forms of support and paperwork. The Task Leader is Caroline Manning. It meets on the 3rd Friday of the month in Dove Cottage. There are 9 in total that have come along but usually there are only 5-7 attendees. 5 carers have regularly attended in the past 2 years and 3 in particular have become very supportive of each other and are in contact outside of the group. Two carers bring their husbands, the cared for are supported on a separate table away from the carers, so the carers are able to talk without the cared for overhearing.

iv. Lunch Clubs

There are two lunch clubs that occur regularly within the Debenham Project. One held at Coopersfield run by Steve Chappell, the other The Cross Green Food and Friends Lunch Club run by Joy Walton and Tony Mowles. Both are run once a month and are very popular giving people company, a hot meal and chance to catch up with friends. The volunteers work very hard.

v. Songs For Sharing

This is run by Joy Walton and Karen Walsh and 4 regular volunteers, it is held at Coopersfield on the first and third Thursday of each month from 10am-12pm. There are over 20 on the list comprising 8 cared for, 7 carers and 5 friends. It is very popular giving people a chance to sing a variety of songs from old time favourites, pop tunes and folk songs. Tea, coffee and biscuits are served and all involved have a great time.

vi. Post Diagnosis Support Service

This service is aimed at supporting Carers and Cared for after diagnosis or after seeing their GP and are waiting for formal diagnosis / pre-diagnosis. The point of contact is Paddy Fielder but often the referral goes to Lynden; there is hope with the new Dementia Service being set up in the area that more referrals will go to Paddy. Paddy is in contact with Dr Luke Morgan at The Debenham Doctor's Practice, to promote The Debenham Project and make sure patients are given the booklet and are aware of the Project's website.

vii. Transport

This service aims to provide lifts and support to and from medically related appointments – hospital, dental, optician, physiotherapy, osteopathy, etc. It is run by Lynden. There are 31 passengers that use the service and 20 drivers, with around 16-25 journeys per month. It is very successful, passengers are very grateful and praise the drivers highly. The problems include organising and administering the service as it is very time consuming. Often there are requests at only a few days' notice and on occasion they have to use drivers who live some miles outside of Debenham.

viii. Garden Party

The Garden Party last year was a huge success that everyone enjoyed; a big thank you to Mike and Lyn Rouse for their exceptionally generous support and all their hard work. This year's party is booked for the 28th June 2-5 pm. Stephen has been asked to perform again and Karen Walsh will be asked too. The maximum number of people who can attend is 130.

Action - Joy to ask Karen Walsh to perform again.

Sue to send out invitations at the end of March

ix. Felixstowe outing

The annual trip to the hut at Felixstowe is run by Joy Walton and Tony Mowles. It involves a maximum of 40 people with approximately 9 volunteers and 10 drivers, and over 20 carers and cared for. It involves fish and chips and strawberries and ice cream by the sea, singing with Karen Walsh and a rickshaw ride up and down the promenade.

This years event is booked for 3rd August 2025 9.30-5 pm. Parking last year was a problem but this will hopefully be easier this year. Joy wanted advice on whether to increase the fee per person from £15 to £20.

x. Website

The website has been set up by Chris Bishop and has received 492 views, including some from around the world e.g. China and the US. The website is easily accessible and received lots of compliments from committee members. It is hugely important to the Debenham Project and is often the first point of contact for those families who are just dealing with the diagnosis of a loved one with Alzheimer's. Chris has written a report re the Website and a What If report which was sent out before the meeting. There is a new email address that is used to access confidential items, including peoples' personal details, stored on a Google drive thedenhamproject@gmail.com. Chris and Lynden have the password needed to access this.

xi. Publicity and Promotion

Social Media is hugely important for The Project to get the name out there, to raise awareness and so hopefully help more people. It also hugely aids with funding if people are aware of what the Project can do to help families coping with dementia. Tammy King is overseeing the social media for the Project and was complimented on her hard work at the meeting. At present she tries to do 3-5 posts a month, the page which opened on 1st November 2024, has received more than 19,000 hits. Posts are automatically shared with the Debenham Village Facebook Page. We are also reaching Grundisburgh, Otley, Mickfield, etc. A mailchimp account has also been set up to enable interested viewers of our posts (and our website) to subscribe to further information, news and other items. It was discussed at the meeting that -

- We should try and get The Debenham Project on to more village Facebook pages to widen the awareness of the Project.
- We should increase publicity in GP Practices
- Get articles on what The Project is doing into more village magazines
- A small leaflet like the one used in Halesworth listing activities that the Project runs and contact numbers should be produced. Carol to ask Sarah Carruthers and Carol and Lynden to organise.
- Increase our presence by doing more events like the one at Helmingham and the table outside the coop and like the table of publicity at Woodbridge Travel

xii. Forms and Paperwork

Mary Hunt volunteers to help support those living with dementia and their carers with completing forms and navigating both the voluntary and statutory organisations that may be able to help them.

Mary had several concerns which were discussed at the meeting -

- It would help to have another volunteer helping her on visits to peoples homes, to share the load and help support the families. Carol offered to support Mary, this would mean Carol will need an appropriate DBS form.
- Sharing information via email or notes following a visit - How do we achieve this to comply with Data Protection? It was suggested that Mary should send information to Chris where it could be put on the confidential site on the website only accessed by password.
- The set up of Suffolk Dementia Support should take some pressure off Mary with providing help with form filling.

The full reports are appended at the end of the minutes.

5. Potential New Activities

i. Respite Care Support

Carol and Caroline have worked hard putting together a proposal for The Debenham Project to offer short term respite care for its members. They were thanked at the meeting for their hard work so far and their thorough report. The Trustees agreed in their meeting for Carol and Caroline to continue to work on the proposal and to do further investigation especially in regards to -

- The impact on The Project
- Impact on Finance
- Look into funding from both the individual and from outside organisations

Everyone agreed how important respite care could be to the carers within The Project.

ii. Care to Dance

Dance East are trying to set up a monthly dance session at the United Reform Church for people with dementia. They are looking for grants to run it, but it will be looking for support from The Project by putting members forward.

6. Current Financial Status

Roger Cockerton sent out, before the meeting, an up to date financial report for The Project which showed all is well and the budget balanced. A thank you to Roger was stated by Trustees.

7. Progress on improving resilience

The following was discussed -

- Important to expand access to documents. Through the new email address that is used to access confidential items, stored on a Google drive Carol, Paddy and Lynden can now all edit documents.
- All Trustees can read documents - Sally to be given access to read also
- Sally to work with Lynden on this month's transport invoicing and expenses so she can learn how to do it in the future. Paddy asked for Transport to be added to next meetings agenda .
- Sarah Carruthers at present does all the graphics for the Project - although she is moving, can she continue, Lynden to ask.

8. To consider how to maximise the benefits of the Project's financial resources

In what way can the Project's money be spent -

- Respite possibly using local carers at £15 per hour
- Research studies
- To Caroline for TLC - Caroline to invoice project
- Committee to look into possible projects and report back at next meeting

9. AOB

- Joy to check out discount with Co op
- New florist Gina Christallino in the village is interested in setting up craft or flower time workshops for people with dementia.

10. Dates and times for future meetings

Trustee meeting 7 pm 26th June in Dove Cottage

Steering Committee Meeting 7.30pm 26th June in Dove Cottage

Summary of Actions Required -

1. Garden Party 28th June 2025 - Joy to ask Karen Walsh to perform again and Sue with Sally's help to send out invitations at the end of March.
2. Felixstowe outing should price be increased to £20 from £15?
3. Publicity
 - Increase awareness of Project by joining more village Facebook pages.
 - Increase publicity in GP Practices
 - Articles into more village magazines
 - Produce leaflet with activities and contact numbers. Carol to ask Sarah Carruthers
 - Apply to do more events like Helmingham Hall.
4. Forms and Paperwork
 - Carol to help Mary on visits so will need appropriate DBS form.
 - Mary to send any confidential information to Chris where it can be stored privately and only accessed by password.
5. Respite Care

Carol and Caroline to continue to work on proposal looking in to

 - How it would impact the Project
 - Impact Finance
 - Funding
6. Improve Resilience
 - Sally to be given access to website to be able to read information
 - Sally to work with Lynden on Transport invoicing and expenses with the view of doing it in the future
 - Lynden to ask Sarah Carruthers if she would be happy to continue to help project with Graphics
7. Caroline to invoice project
8. Joy to check out discount with Co op