



Minutes for Combined Trustees and Steering Group Meeting

Dove Cottage, 7.30 pm, 5th February 2026

Present: Lynden Jackson, Paddy Fielder, Sue Jackson, Carol Garrett, Richard Blackwell, Caroline Manning, Chris Bishop, Mike Rouse, Lucy Robins and Sally Holmes.

1. Welcome and apologies

- Apologies were received from Tammy King, Joy Walton, Roger Cockerton, Janice Romaniszyn and Steve Chappell.

2. Previous Minutes (2nd October 2025)

The following items were discussed -

- Carers Directory - Sarah Fielder has worked very hard on this and has completed half of it, Carol is working on the other half.
- Referral Form has been completed by Paddy and Lynden.
- Chris has only just received photos of last Hut visit and will be adding them to website soon.
- Risk register is still on-going for Roger and Paddy.
- Another volunteer is still needed to help with home visits, forms and paperwork.

3. Chairman's report and update

Lynden sent out a report with the agenda for this meeting. The aim of the Project is to be there for those families, carers, cared for who are struggling with the impact of dementia. Lynden is very happy with how the Debenham Project is going. He is very grateful for all the volunteers that give their time as without them the Project wouldn't exist.

4. Progress Reports

Activities and Groups

Please see report on Carers Club, Fit Club, TLC, Lunch Club and Songs for Sharing sent out with the Agenda. All activities are going well and no concerns were highlighted.

Allotment

Please see detailed report written by Carol. In the near future discussions with carers needs to take place as to how they see the allotment helping them. The allotment has been prepared and it needs to be decided what to grow - need hardy plants, flowers, possibly vegetables, fruit like gooseberries that don't need a lot of looking after. Around April plants will need to be collected, hopefully there will be plenty of donations. Hopefully it can be an enjoyable place for all.

Services

See Report sent out with Agenda.

Transport - Paddy felt the driver who stayed with his passenger all night at A&E deserved a thank you from the trustees.

Action - Paddy to write letter of thank you to driver who stayed at A&E.

- After the meeting Lucy stated that it would be easier to have a phone that was on a contract rather than pay as you go in case it ran out during a call and that it would be easier to have a phone where contacts could be saved on it. Obviously this phone will need to have a pass code for data protection. Lucy will look into a phone and contract and will let Trustees know.

Events

November "60s Party"- see report by Joy Walton. Sally described the event and what a success it was, how it was enjoyed not just by the Debenham Project families but also by people in the village. A big thank you to Joy and Tammy for all their hard work was given from the Trustees.

Felixstowe Outing -
The Hut is booked for 9th August 2026.

Promotion

Please see report by Tammy King, in that report Tammy highlights the following priorities and goals for the year ahead -

Raising Awareness and Encouraging Fundraising

While fundraising is a core part of being a charity, it is an area where we have traditionally been quite understated! This year, there is an opportunity to be more confident and visible in promoting fundraising efforts, encouraging supporters to get involved and highlighting the impact of donations more clearly.

Newsletter Distribution and Reach

Developing a clear distribution plan for the newsletter is a priority. This includes identifying who would like to receive it, how it can be shared more widely, and where it can be circulated to maximise reach and awareness. Which trustees can help with this please?

Improving Content and Storytelling

Strong content is essential. There is scope to include more updates from across the organisation, such as:

- News about current projects and activities
 - Photos from sessions and events
 - Volunteer profiles
 - "A day in the life" features, including carers, trustees and volunteers
- This will help showcase the breadth of our work and the people behind it.

Database Growth and Data Capture

Growing and managing the database for newsletters and engaging with our audience more effectively is key. At events, we should actively capture email addresses. All new participants at clubs, volunteers, and service users should have their email details passed on to Tammy so they can be added to the correct marketing database. Clear identification of whether someone is a volunteer or service user is essential to ensure appropriate communication.

Volunteer and Membership Onboarding

There is potential benefit in introducing a more formal volunteer contact form and a standardised joining form for the Debenham Project. This would allow us to capture all relevant information at the outset, improve communication, and ensure data is accurate and well organised.

Advice and Information

Website - All going well.

Action - Needs photos of events to keep website up- to-date.

5. Outreach

Referrals

Paddy and Lynden have produced a referral form which has been given to the memory clinics, Shaftesbury, Suffolk Family Carers, CAB and Drs Surgeries. They haven't heard back from Drs Surgeries but all the other organisations have been very positive about it and have put it on their websites for people to access. It is early days but Paddy has already received one referral. It is up to the carer to seek support and this can happen at any stage, either at the beginning of the diagnosis or further along. The organisation showing the carer the referral form can help them fill it out and then it is forwarded to Paddy.

6. New Activities, Services and events

Activities

Care to Dance -

Please see report sent out from Carol Garrett.

Care to Dance is going well. At the moment there is funding to keep it going till the end of April. A bid has gone in to MSDC to pay for it to continue along with a donation from the Project of £200. The carers and cared for both enjoy the activity, with carers having a chance to talk and gain support from Caroline and other carers. There are 2 former carers one recently bereaved, who are also helping and getting support too.

Services

Respite Care Support -

Please see Report prepared by Caroline Manning.

Initially there were 4 families using the respite scheme but now there is only 3, as one cared for had to go into care. Scheme is working well and they have had a lot of positive feedback from carers. Caroline is trying to encourage other carers to consider respite, especially those that attend TLC and would benefit from the scheme. Carers are often reluctant to use it as feel it is their role to look after their loved one and are worried about their loved one being apart from

them. It helps that a representative from Christies comes to TLC to help advise. Carers get to know them and they can build trust with them.

There needs to be clear criteria, that needs to be met by the carer and cared for, before being accepted on to the respite scheme.

The trial was to end at the end of February, but there are still funds left for it to continue longer than that. Funding is also being applied for from various places including MSDC. Trustees agreed for the Respite trial to continue while funds were available. The trustees really appreciate the hard work Caroline is putting in, her personal approach towards the carers is so important.

Action

- Caroline would really like some form of supervision to be set up to help support her in her role, so she knows she has given the right advice and nothing has been forgotten.
- Be useful to have another feedback session in March, with Christies, as to how the scheme is going.

Events

A 'jukebox' party is planned at DLC on Friday 1st May 2-6pm, cost £20 including bar drink, quiz, afternoon tea and vocalist Gina Cristilliano, plus special guest Elvis returns.

7. Governance

Finance

Roger had prepared financial statement this will be discussed at the Trustee meeting in March.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding training took place for trustees and steering group leaders on Tuesday 7th October 2025 and 2 sessions for volunteers on Thursday 9th October 2025. These sessions were very successful and the feedback was positive. Out of 62 volunteers 40 attended, so there are 22 volunteers that need to read through the slides that were prepared by Christies.

Action

- It is essential and indeed mandatory that all volunteers undertake training, either with us or with another recognised organisation eg a church
- Carol to give list of 22 volunteers that didn't receive the safeguarding training to Lynden so he can ask them to read through Christies slides online.
- Drivers need to be provided with a small card with Safeguarding Officer contact details on so they have a point of contact if they are worried about anything.
- Another person is needed to support Paddy with the safeguarding role.

Resilience

Chris explained that Google Drive in the cloud is working well, the people that need access have the link to get in. It is very difficult to password protect every file and becomes very complicated. It was agreed that it would be kept as it is at present. Chris reminded people to be vigilant, to have their virus protection up to date and look out for phishing scams. Chris and Lynden both have back ups on external hard drives.

Lynden needs updated data on all volunteers, carers and cared for in every activity the Debenham Project runs, so it can all be updated on Google Drive. It was discussed whether it was necessary to keep archive material on Google Drive. It was agreed that the archive material shouldn't be older than 2 years old.

Action -

Please could leaders of all activities and services give an up to date list of all those taking part including volunteers to Lynden. He needs their names, role at activity or service (their involvement), address, email and telephone number.

Data Security

Please see Draft Online Security Policy prepared by Chris Bishop this will be discussed at the Trustees meeting on the 11th March, Chris will attend.

Succession Planning

Lynden and Sue both feel it is time for them to step back from being the leaders of The Debenham Project. They still want to be involved as volunteers, but they don't want the stress of running The Project any more. Everyone agreed what a fantastic job they have done and that they would be a hard act to follow. Everyone is hugely grateful for the time and effort they have both put in in setting up and running The Debenham Project.

Paddy has agreed to oversee the transition but would also like to stand down as chair of the Trustees once a new chair has been chosen.

The importance of keeping the continuity of The Project going was discussed, especially Carers Club which is a huge part of the Project. Sue is happy to carry on organising Fit Club but wants to step back from Carers Club, so a leader or leaders are needed to take this over.

It was suggested that everyone goes away and thinks through what these changes could mean, what areas need to be addressed, should the new chair of the Debenham Project be someone from within the group already or is there an external person that could be suitable.

Action

- Please could everyone put their ideas, concerns together and send them to Sally by 25th February. All points will be compiled together and sent to Paddy. From those points an agenda will be written for the Trustees meeting on March 11th.

8. AOB

Richard reminded people at the meeting that recent emails sent to the trustees stated the importance of the trustees to fulfil their roles regarding due diligence, meeting the requirements of the Charity Commission and equalities and safeguarding regulations. It is important to take into account the health and wellbeing of all trustees and project leaders, they should support each other to achieve this and not just focus on the tasks needing doing. They must be careful not to lose sight of the more 'human' side of being a trustee or project leader.

9. Date of next meeting

Trustees Meeting 11th March at 7.30 pm in Dove Cottage.