**Dementia Friendly Communities**

Shropshire Telford and Wrekin Dementia Action Alliance (DAA) has been working for nearly five years to create dementia friendly communities across Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin. The DAA has over 70 full members and 200 supporter organisations.

The Alzheimer’s Society defines a dementia friendly community as:

**“A city, town or village where people with dementia are understood, respected and supported, and confident they can contribute to community life. In a dementia friendly community people will be aware of and understand dementia, and people with dementia will feel included and involved, and have choice and control over their day-to-day lives”**

People with dementia have described a dementia friendly community as one that enables them to:

• find their way around and be safe

• access the local facilities that they are used to and where they are known (such as banks, shops, cafes, cinemas and post offices)

• maintain their social networks so they feel they continue to belong.

Dementia friendly communities are those in which people with dementia have the best possible opportunities to live well. The idea that it is possible to ‘live well’ with dementia is one that presents a challenge to the orthodox view of dementia. The idea that a diagnosis of dementia is life-ending is deeply ingrained but is increasingly being challenged as new visions for living well with dementia emerge. The notion of ‘living well’ is difficult to pin down, and highly individual. However, research suggests that there are some common themes for people with dementia and common outcomes that we might expect to see from people living well with dementia.

There are now Dementia Friendly Community steering groups in Wem, Oswestry, Whitchurch, Cleobury Mortimer, Ludlow, Bishops Castle, with a new group about to start in Ellesmere.

We therefore would like to speak to your Council as a starting point to setting up a steering group to make your community dementia friendly. Indeed, we would be very happy to offer a dementia friends session (45 minutes) at one of your meetings.

I look forward to hearing from you.

George Rook

Chair, Shropshire Telford & Wrekin Dementia Action Alliance

Chair, Member of Three Nations Dementia Working Group

Co-Chair of LEAP, the Lived Experience Advisory Panel, Dementia UK

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