



ALICIA KEARNS MP

Rutland's Great Dementia Conversation

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

Guidance for Rutland Parish Councils

www.RutlandDementia.com

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WHAT IS RUTLAND'S GREAT DEMENTIA CONVERSATION?

We all want everyone in our communities to live as happy and fulfilled a life as possible, and with dementia affecting one in two of us in our lifetime, either by caring for someone with the condition, developing it ourselves, or both, it's important our communities are as supportive as possible of all those living with dementia, or caring for loved ones with the condition.

By working together we can make Rutland the first Dementia Friendly County in the UK.

We would love every Parish and Town Council to be part of our journey to becoming the first Dementia Friendly County in the UK. As well as making sure we are all as supportive as we can be, we hope our Dementia Conversation will encourage anyone locally who's noticed something has changed, or whose loved one may be showing signs of dementia, to have the confidence to step forward and access the support we have in Rutland.

In Rutland our dementia diagnosis rates are around 10% below the national average.

This suggests we have quite a few people in our communities living without the support they could access. It's never too early to start a conversation, and never too late to seek support, we hope by starting a conversation, more of us will feel confident seeking out support.

There will be a number of events held across Rutland, as well as online support available.

The purpose of this action plan is to support Parish Councils to promote inclusive dementia friendly communities, and to embrace actions and approaches that best support people in our communities with dementia.

Guidance is available at:

www.RutlandDementia.com

Any questions, please email:

alicia.kearns.mp@parliament.uk

Thank you for your commitment to better supporting everyone in our communities living with dementia or supporting loved ones or community members with the condition.

Together we can start a conversation, overcome the reluctance to discuss dementia, and become the first Dementia Friendly County in the UK.



Alicia Kearns

Member of Parliament for Rutland and Melton





Supporting Members of our Community With Dementia

This information is designed to help Parish Councils to best support members of our community living with dementia and those who support and care for them.

What is dementia? *Dementia currently affects over 900,000 people in the UK.*

There are many forms of dementia, with the most common being Alzheimer's disease and vascular dementia. Each individual will experience their dementia differently, but they are all diseases of the brain which can cause:

- Memory loss.
- Problems with everyday tasks, like handling money.
- Difficulties with communication both speaking and understanding.
- Confusion regarding time or place.
- Sight and hearing problems.
- Perception problems.
- Altered behaviours.

It is progressive – in that it starts off with very mild symptoms and gets worse over time. It affects everyone differently. No two people with dementia are the same.

Why do I need to know this? Many people in Rutland already have dementia.

As the population ages, more Rutlanders may develop dementia and will be using council services.

Many people with dementia withdraw from their communities due to worries and uncertainty about how they will cope with daily tasks.

Encouragement and support from the council can help those living with dementia be more independent and remain part of their local community, participating in the every day activities of daily life.

Improving your understanding of how to help people with dementia will enable them to continue using your services.

What are people with dementia like?

Each person's experiences of dementia is different – activities that one person struggles with may not be a problem for someone else.

Most people think of someone with dementia as:

- Very confused.
- Needs a lot of help.
- Lives in a care home.
- Can't communicate.
- Cannot control themselves.

This is how the media often portrays people with dementia, however, most people will not fit this stereotype.

They are more likely to have much less pronounced difficulties, live independently, get out and about, use shops and cafes, and be doing the same kind of things we all do, but they may just need a little more help to carry on doing these things as time goes by.

How can I spot a person with dementia?

You can't.

Some people with dementia will tell you if they are having problems and how you can help, or they may carry a card which explains the difficulties they experience and the help they need.

Other people with dementia may feel uncomfortable disclosing information about their dementia, or having attention drawn to their difficulties. You may find that people refer to having memory-problems rather than using the word dementia.

Most people with dementia are over 65, but some are younger.

Many people living with dementia may not be aware as diagnosis rates in Rutland are currently below the national average.

Carers may also indicate that the person they are with has some difficulties, it is important however to continue to work with the person with dementia rather than just the carer.

You might also notice people doing, or saying, things which suggest they are having problems that might be caused by dementia.

Memory Concerns - What can I do?

Everyday contact with older people can help develop positive relationships and build a picture of that person.

For an older person living alone, neighbours and community members may be the first to notice changes in their behaviour.

Difficulties a person with dementia may experience include:

- Looking, or saying, that they are a bit lost or confused.
- Appearing to be searching for something they can't find.
- Looking like they don't know what to do next.
- Appearing to find self-service facilities hard to understand.
- Difficulties with speech, which may be hard to understand or they may be struggling to find the right words to explain.
- Appearing to have problems understanding what is said to them.

There are however all sorts of reasons why people might be having these problems that are nothing to do with dementia or memory problems, but you may begin to identify signs that enable someone to explore if they are experiencing challenges.

Generally-speaking – the younger the person appears to be, the less likely it is to be dementia-related. But remember, younger people can have dementia too.

What should I do if I have concerns?

Remember every person is an individual, an approach that will work with one individual may not work for another.

If you have established a relationship with the person it may be possible to have a conversation around memory issues and any support the council could provide, and to help access the services you offer. If possible it is useful to ask if the individual has seen their own General Practitioner regarding their memory issues, as they can facilitate tests to rule out other conditions with similar symptoms and provide referrals to clinical specialists.

Some people choose not to discuss medical conditions with anyone, even close family, and may find such a conversation very difficult. Try to find a balance between offering help and respecting privacy.

Where family members are also known, they could be approached. However it should be noted that occasionally family members are reluctant to acknowledge changes in a loved one's ability.

Who can I speak to for more advice?

For general advice regarding concerns about individuals where the person is not open to an approach but behaviour is causing concern.

There are several helplines, including:

- Age UK Leicestershire and Rutland: 0116 299 2278
- Alzheimer's Society: 0333 150 3456

If the individual's GP is known it can be useful to have a conversation with the GP and make them aware. Please be aware that GPs are not permitted to disclose any confidential information with other individuals but can listen to concerns.

If the GP is unknown and the concerns are significant but not life threatening (including safeguarding concerns around neglect or abuse) the Rutland County Council Adult Social Care team can be contacted on:

- 01572 758 341

If you are concerned about a person with altered behaviour or memory problems who you feel is at significant risk of immediate harm please phone the emergency services on 999.

What will happen?

If calls logged with the Alzheimer's Society, or Age UK are noted to have significant concerns these can be referred on to the Adult Social Care team, where the individual may already be known and a referral to the GP will be made.

If the individual is unknown to Adult Social Care, information regarding the individual's GP can be sought and a referral made. A social work assessment can also be completed if the individual agrees.

Some people may be aware that they have memory issues but choose not to take any action, this is entirely within that person's rights and as long as the individual has mental capacity to make that decision no further action would be taken. You should however continue to support them in accessing the services provided by your organisation.

What can the GP do?

Before a diagnosis of dementia can be considered the GP needs to rule out any other underlying conditions that may cause similar symptoms to dementia.

If the tests are all clear and the difficulties remain then a referral would be made by the GP to the Memory Service at Leicester General Hospital, before the referral is seen at a clinic appointment at Rutland Memorial Hospital.

Memory Service Team

The Memory Service provides assessment, diagnosis and treatment for people who are experiencing memory difficulties.

If someone has concerns about their own or a loved one's memory they are advised to initially speak to their GP so appropriate pre-screening tests can be completed.

For further information please contact the Memory Service on 0116 225 6143

There is no hard and fast rule in accessing help and support for individuals experiencing changes in their ability to cope with everyday situations.

If communities respond to the needs of individuals and work to remove the stigma associated with memory loss and dementia, individuals with dementia will be able to live well in the community with or without a diagnosis.



What can I do to help?

If you have good ‘people skills’ you already have much of what you need to provide support to someone with dementia. Kindness, respect, common sense, avoiding stress, using good communication skills and a smile go a very long way.

When dealing with someone you know or believe may have dementia you should:

Speaking

- Take your time – speak clearly and not too quickly.
- Use short simple sentences.
- Try to make only one point at a time.
- Say things more simply if you need to.
- Try saying things another way.
- Use direct questions so “Can I help you to...?” Rather than “What would you like me to do?”

Listening

- Allow the person to take their time.
- Listen very carefully and make sure that you are communicating through your body language that you are listening and focused on them.
- Try to best guess if you still don’t understand and say something along the line of “I’m finding it hard to understand you – are you saying.....?”

Body language

- Make sure you are at the same level as the person.
- Use good eye contact.
- Use sign language and gestures to reinforce what you are saying.
- Be conscious of their body language.

For many people with dementia, this will be all they need, and will be able to explain exactly how you can help.

Try to avoid:

- Calling from a distance – many people with dementia also have hearing problems, or might have difficulty locating where the voice is coming from. It is also much less friendly than approaching someone directly.
- Standing too close or in a manner that could be perceived as threatening.
- Covering your mouth – facial expressions help the person with dementia understand what you are saying.
- Attempting to hurry them.
- Letting any impatience show, especially in the form of raised eyebrows, “tutting”, or exchanging knowing looks with others.

What if more help is needed?

One approach is to ask the person if they would like to take a rest or a sit-down somewhere quiet. Quite often, after a break, people feel much better and are able to function more effectively.

Ask the person if there is anyone you can contact who might be able to help. If so, then call them.

If none of this works, depending upon the nature of the situation you could call:

- Your community police officer: 101
- Adult Social Care team: 01572 758 341
- If the person appears to be at risk, then the emergency services as a last resort.



Dementia Friendly Environment Checklist

Small changes can make a big difference

For many individuals with dementia the environment (both internal and external), has a significant impact on their ability to continue to access everyday activities such as attending a coffee morning, visiting the local village shop or coming to the village hall.

There are a number of small, low cost changes that Parish Councils can consider to improve accessibility for individuals with dementia for your village halls. Most of the suggestions are relatively low cost and are beneficial for everyone, not just those with dementia.

This list is not exhaustive and one of the best ways to assess how well people with dementia can access your village hall is to ask.

Entrances

- Entrances should be clearly visible and obvious.
- Gates and doors should require no more than 2kg of pressure to open them.
- For disabled access doors the push button should be immediately obvious.
- Ensure that glass doors are clearly marked.
- Consider removing black mats which can be difficult for visual perception

Signage

- Signs should be clear, in bold face with good contrast between text and background.
- There should be a contrast between the sign and the surface it is mounted on.
- Signs should be fixed to the doors they refer to – not on adjacent surfaces.
- Signs should be at eye level and well-lit.
- The use of highly stylised or abstract images or icons as representations on signage should be avoided.

- Think about placing signs at key decision points for someone who is trying to navigate a premises for the first time.
- Signs for toilets and exits (when returning from the toilet to central areas) are particularly important.
- Ensure that any temporary external signage (sandwich type boards) do not obscure bollards or other street furniture that a person with dementia may use to navigate the street with.

Lighting

- Entrances should be well-lit and make as much use of natural light as possible.
- Pools of bright light and deep shadows should be avoided.

Flooring

- Flooring should be plain, non-shiny and non-slip.
- Bold patterns on carpets, curtains or wallpaper can cause perceptual problems to people, and so plain walls and flooring are recommended.
- Any changes in floor finish should be flush rather than stepped, as changes to floor surfaces can also cause confusion.

Quiet area

- A space within your building for someone who may be feeling anxious or confused can help that individual recover sufficiently to complete the task and help maintain independence.

Seating

- In larger premises a seating area, especially in areas where people are waiting, can be a big help.
- People with dementia prefer seating that looks like seating, for example a wooden bench rather than an abstract metal Z-shaped bench.

Toilets

- Do you have a unisex toilet or other facility which would allow someone to have assistance without causing them or other users embarrassment?
- Toilet seats that are of a contrasting colour to the walls and rest of the toilet are easier to see if someone has visual problems.

Layout

- Keep the environment free of clutter.
- Arrange furniture/fittings to make it easy to move around, creating a clear and obvious passageway.
- Visibility – ensure products are easy to see.

Navigation

- Research shows that people with dementia use 'landmarks' to navigate their way around, both inside and outside. The more attractive and interesting the landmark (which could be a painting, or a plant) the easier it is to use as a landmark.

Other issues

- This list is not exhaustive, and there are other issues people with dementia may find challenging. Unexpected things can cause problems like reflections or reflective surfaces. If you are able to adapt to the needs of people living with dementia, this can ease many environmental barriers.



Support Available in Rutland

Further details on the support available can be found at: www.RutlandDementia.com

Rutland Dementia Support Service

Who's it for? People living with dementia in Rutland, their carers, and health and social care professionals.

The Dementia Support Service for Rutland is run by Age UK Leicestershire and Rutland and acts as a single point of contact for people with dementia living in Rutland, their carers and health and social care professionals.

The service offers a six-week intensive support which will identify your needs and agree with you what you want to achieve. It also provides information about services, how to access them and it'll signpost you to sources of ongoing support to help you when the six-week period of intensive support ends.

Contact: 0116 223 7363
dementia.support@ageukleics.org.uk

Age UK also runs a peer support group and activity group through which you can find advice and support about living well with dementia, and share experiences with other local people facing the same challenges.

Admiral Nurse Service

Who's it for? People living with dementia in Rutland, their carers, and family.

Dementia UK provides specialist dementia support for families through the Admiral Nurse Service. Admiral Nurses are specialist dementia nurses who give practical and emotional support to family, carers, as well as the person with dementia. They can support you and your family throughout your experience of dementia, tailoring the support to your individual needs and challenges

Access: you can self-refer to the service or you can be referred your GP or other supporting agencies.

Contact: 01572 720 959.
Dementia UK Helpline: 0800 888 6678
admiralnurse@rutland.gov.uk

Rutland Memory Cafe

Who's it for? People living with dementia in Rutland, their carers and family members.

When? 1st Monday of the month (excluding bank holidays).

Where? Taylor House, Johnson Road, Uppingham.

Age UK Leicestershire and Rutland runs a monthly memory cafe, providing access to advice and support about living well with dementia as well as giving opportunities to share experiences and support with peers.

Rutland Carers Support Group

Who's it for? Anyone who cares for someone with a long-term illness, e.g dementia

When? The last Wednesday of each month.

Where? The Common Room at St John and St Anne, South Street, Oakham

Open to anyone caring for someone with a long-term debilitating illness. A packed programme of speakers and activities is offered to cater to all tastes, including an afternoon tea trip out.

Contact: Yvonne Rawlings 0773 8820910
yvonne.rawlings@ageukleics.org.uk

Befriending Services

Age UK Leicestershire and Rutland

Who's it for? People living with dementia in Rutland, and older people who are lonely and isolated.

Age UK provides a befriending service to offer companionship and support to older people who are lonely or isolated.

The service provides a link to the outside world and can act as a gateway to other services and support.

The service offers home visits in Rutland where an older person is matched with a befriender who can provide friendly conversation and companionship on a regular basis. A telephone befriending service is also available, for friendly chat and a listening ear.

To refer someone or yourself:

Contact: 01572 824 048
victoria.ugrinic@ageukleics.org.uk

National Support

Alzheimer's Society Dementia Support Line
- 0333 1503456

Who's it for? People living with dementia, their carers and families, and professionals in health and social care.

This dementia support service gives personalised help and advice, answering your questions, and connecting you to the support you need.

Opening Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am–8pm;
Saturday, 10am–4pm; Sunday, 10am–4pm.

Alzheimer's Society Dementia Support Forum

Who's it for? People living with dementia and their carers, family and friends.

The Dementia Support Forum is an online support community for people with dementia, carers, family and friends to discuss all aspects of dementia.

It is open 24-7, and is a safe place to ask questions, share your experiences and receive advice and support.

<https://forum.alzheimers.org.uk/>

**Dementia UK Dementia Helpline -
0800 888 6678**

The specialist dementia nurses on Dementia UK's free, confidential Helpline are here for you when you need help. Whatever you're worried about, they have the time to listen and the knowledge to solve problems.

They can help you understand more about dementia and feel more in control, giving you the tools and the confidence to manage your future with dementia together.

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 9am-9pm, Saturday and Sunday 9am-5pm, Open bank holidays (9am-5pm), except 25th December

Email: helpline@dementiauk.org

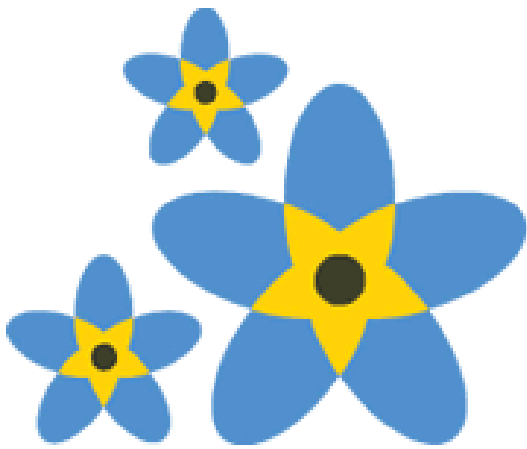
Further information

This list is not exhaustive and there are many support services, helplines, social groups and activities available locally.

For more information on the support available, please visit:

www.RutlandDementia.com

Rutland



Working to become
**Dementia
Friendly**

Resources to Help Raise Awareness

People living with dementia may experience a range of symptoms associated with their dementia, which have the potential to impact on their ability to interact with those they encounter.

Similarly those they encounter may be unsure how and whether to help people who appear to be experiencing difficulties.

People with dementia all differ in the way they experience their dementia, but generally speaking in public situations people with dementia may experience difficulties including:

- Problems remembering what they are doing.
- Difficulty in communicating clearly.
- Problems navigating in complex or confusing environments.

People who may be experiencing these kinds of difficulties tell us repeatedly that it is the attitude of those they encounter in their communities which has the biggest impact on their ability to continue with their daily business and remain independent.

What do you need to know?

Research has shown that those with good 'people skills' may already have many of the attributes or skills they need to be able to support people with dementia as customers.

However, a basic understanding of the impact of dementia and how to support people can make a huge difference when interacting with people living with dementia.

The needs of people with dementia may differ from one encounter to the next. For example, the role and training need of a police officer will be very different from that of a shop assistant.

It is important therefore to recognise that training and awareness raising is at its best when it is designed for the audience in mind.

However, there are likely to be some similar themes and needs across all public-facing situations:

- Why dementia awareness matters.
- How to recognise that people may be having problems.
- How to respond to people who may be having problems.
- How to communicate more effectively with people with memory problems.
- What to do if someone needs help.

There are a range of training and awareness-raising options available locally for those who wish to improve their understanding and awareness of dementia, and these are outlined below.

Dementia awareness & training resources

These options presented are readily available training options (these options are not mutually exclusive):

- Formal training sessions.
- Dementia Friend Information sessions.
- Online training.
- Printing materials e.g booklets from Alzheimer's Society.
- This booklet's guidance for customer-facing staff.

Dementia Awareness Events in Rutland

Formal Dementia Awareness Training from the Alzheimer's Society

Formal training offers and insight into the everyday experience of the person with dementia and looks at how the person may be affected physically by dementia, as well as the signs, symptoms, impact of and treatment of the disease, alongside best practice methods of empowering those living with dementia.

Formal training covers a huge variety of options from a half day session to a course over several months with assessed assignments, and can be tailored to staff within individual organisations.

Suitable for:

- People who may come into regular or sustained contact with people with dementia.
- This training is comprehensive, delivered by an accredited facilitator, and can be targeted to workforce.

More Information

www.RutlandDementia.com

An in-person session will be held in Rutland in May or June. Date tbc.

Dementia Friends Information Session

Dementia Friends is a national initiative run by Alzheimer's Society. It aims to improve people's understanding of dementia and its effects. The Alzheimer's Society is working with many volunteers and other organisations to achieve this goal, with the aim of helping to create dementia friendly communities.

People with dementia sometimes need a helping hand to go about their daily lives and feel included in their local community. Dementia Friends gives people an understanding of dementia and the small things that they can do that could make a difference to people living with dementia.

Suitable for:

- Anyone who may come into contact with people with dementia. Parish Councils, businesses and organisations with limited resources.

The free sessions last 45 minutes. They are fun and informative.

More information

www.RutlandDementia.com

An in person session to be held in Rutland in May or June, date tbc.

Rutland Dementia Awareness, Training and Support Programme with Angela Rippon

Date: Friday 28th June

Details coming soon!

Virtual Resources:

Dementia Friends Online Interactive Video

For those who are unable to access face to face dementia training sessions, an online session is now available in a 5 minute interactive information video.

Suitable for:

- People who may come into contact with people with dementia, but have difficulty accessing face to face friends sessions.

More information

- www.dementiafriends.org.uk

Written Resources

The Alzheimer's Society produces a range of information free to download.

This includes:

- Leaflets on a variety of aspects of dementia with information on social, legal and medical impacts.
- On-going information about dementia and what's going on locally via national and local newsletters and factsheets.

Suitable for:

- Those who may come into contact with people with dementia.
- Those who want more in-depth knowledge on a particular aspect of dementia.
- Parish Councils, businesses or organisations with limited time.

More information

www.alzheimers.org.uk

Action	Lead for Parish Council	Timescale	Tick once completed
1. Parish Council identifies lead for promoting dementia-friendly community approaches.			
2. Parish Council Representative attends Rutland Dementia Awareness session provided by the Alzheimer's Society UK (see www.RutlandDementia.com).			
3. Promote Rutland's Great Dementia Conversation events to your communities.			
4. Identify community groups in the Parish e.g. WI, faith groups, to take forward promoting dementia friendly approaches in the community, or run new support groups.			
5. All Parish Council members to watch 5 minute Dementia Friends video.			
6. Adopt dementia friendly signage in all public buildings i.e. village halls, churches etc. (guidance included) and ensure community buildings are as dementia friendly as possible (guidance included).			
7. Promote raising awareness about dementia with businesses, organisations and their staff and members in the parish.			
8. Consider hosting a Dementia Support Group to bring together those living with dementia, and/or those caring for those living with dementia in your parish.			
9. Inform Alicia Kearns MP which activities you have been able to achieve, and hopefully achieve 'Dementia Friendly Parish' status.			
10. Update your communities on your efforts and activities, and your Dementia Friendly Status.			