



SDAA Newsletter

November 2020

After a long period without being able to hold face-to-face SDAA meetings, one was held by Zoom on 24th November; this newsletter represents the notes of that meeting. If you would like to know any more about any of the items, please contact: sdaa@selseycommunityforum.uk.

- ◆ Covid-19 restrictions have had a significant impact on local dementia-related activities but have also led to innovation and some creative ways of working.
 - ◆ Return to Sunday School, the reminiscence activity with spiritual content, was planned to restart in December and continue about monthly into 2021.
 - ◆ Reminiscence films shows, a new project currently postponed after the successful initial session, is planned to restart monthly in the New Year.
 - ◆ The churches' congregations have been keeping in touch and looking after each other and are looking forward to services recommencing over the Christmas period.
 - ◆ Care Homes had enjoyed the opportunity to take things outside into the garden during the summer but were now finding things more difficult in autumn when activities had to take place indoors. Projects involving staff and residents such as a fashion show and birthday celebrations had been welcome and staff team-building exercises with new staff members had been valuable and also helped to deal with bereavement. It was suggested that intergenerational pen-pal schemes might be beneficial as might a 'Living History' project capturing individual recollections before they are lost.
 - ◆ Local Care Homes have been getting ready for Christmas with The Old Malthouse planning a Christmas Tree Decoration Competition, a carol-singing visit (to the garden!) by the Shanty Men and are seeking to arrange for local Primary schools to provide carols either by Zoom or DVD as well as being involved in other projects. These events provide more interaction and interest because they offer new faces that residents don't see every day; they are particularly valued by those who don't often receive visitors.
 - ◆ Selsey Community Forum is hoping to arrange and fund a professional Christmas Celebration to be live-streamed into local Care Homes.
- ◆ Although the Selsey Covid-19 Mutual Aid project had been put into hibernation at the end of July, the Buddy System, with around 80 volunteers, has been retained and is continuing to provide shopping and other support to our more vulnerable residents, including those living with dementia. A number of Buddies are involved in dementia and Care Certificate training with which the Community Dementia Matron is assisting.
- ◆ The Selsey Care Shop has been working in partnership with Selsey Medical Practice to find appropriate ways of keeping families living with dementia in their own home.
 - ◆ Some problems have surprisingly simple solutions – in one case, difficulties within a family living with dementia were overcome by providing a hearing aid!
- ◆ In a recent heart-warming event, appropriate measures were taken with a number of different agencies to allow a wife who had been in a Care Home for a year to return home to her husband because he simply couldn't live without her.
- ◆ Good Morning Selsey, offering a friendly chat on the phone, is making about 55 calls each

day, including some to those living with dementia. Although not their main purpose, the calls are very effective at identifying and resolving problems which have arisen. In addition, calls are regularly made to keep in contact with those living with dementia and their carers.

- ◆ Although affected by Covid-19 restrictions, the development of Selsey Community Forum services in Bracklesham, the Witterings and Birdham have continued alongside work by Sage House Wayfinders project. The Singing Memories group is currently suspended but 12 volunteers are making daily phone calls to around 15 individuals each day and a befriending service is being developed. The Birdham Amblers' Group, originally set up as a walking club, now has around 30 members and is expanding its activities to include social events (when permitted) and the production of a regular newsletter.
- ◆ In cases where those living with dementia go missing, it can be vital to provide the police with a recent photograph and information such as their favourite places which might help the search for them. The Herbert Protocol is a form which provides this information. Following recent incidents in Selsey, the adoption of this scheme is being given a high priority with existing clients and those registering with the Selsey Care Shop being encouraged to take part. In addition, the Buddies are helping to promote use of the form.
- ◆ In spite of the difficulties this year, or perhaps because of them, Selsey Community Forum has provided an increasing range of free services:
 - ◆ Dementia Support - with Karen Halford now responsible for dementia outreach support.
 - ◆ Carers Support - continuing to support carers dealing with a wide range of care needs.
 - ◆ Befriending - regular contact with the lonely and those needing a little more support.
 - ◆ Buddy Support which is currently forming small friendship groups within the community so that the neighbourliness developed this year is continued into the future and not lost.
 - ◆ Wellbeing Services which provides low-level mental health support and, in partnership with Chichester University, bereavement and other counselling.
 - ◆ Money Support which, in partnership with Frontline Debt Support, offers debt advice and support as well as help with applying for allowances and other entitlements.
- ◆ We look back in satisfaction at what has been achieved in difficult circumstances during 2020 and look forward to the New Year which will bring new projects and other events, including:
 - ◆ Hidden Disabilities - dementia and other conditions with symptoms that are not immediately apparent are often misunderstood. The project seeks to create a community with better understanding, compassion and kindness towards those living with hidden disabilities.
 - ◆ Suicide Prevention - particularly aimed at older bereaved and lonely people; experience has shown the need for such a project and funding is currently being sought.
 - ◆ Compassionate Community – linking with Public Health, a project seeking to help people tackle sometimes difficult conversations. Research shows that around half of people avoid talking to the bereaved in case they say the wrong thing. Perversely, around half of those who have been bereaved regret the fact that others don't speak to them about their experience even if they do say the wrong thing. Better that people who don't know what to say do say something rather than nothing and that the bereaved know they have not been forgotten and are supported by the community.
 - ◆ We look forward to holding the 3rd Annual General Meeting of the Selsey Dementia Action Alliance in March.
 - ◆ A visit by the Dementia Bus is booked for May.
- ◆ The next SDAA Open Meeting will be held on 26th January 2021 when we hope to enjoy a face-to-face gathering.