



# Forget-Me-Not

Selsey's Dementia-Friendly Community Project

## SDAA Newsletter

February 2026

This newsletter is formed from reports from members of the Selsey Dementia Action Alliance.

The meeting was held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at The Beacon Church.

To find out more about any of the items, contact: [sdaa@selseycommunityforum.uk](mailto:sdaa@selseycommunityforum.uk)

✿ **Apologies** were accepted.

✿ **Chairman's Report:**

Mike welcomed everyone to the meeting.

✿ **Karen Halford Report**

It's been a busy few weeks supporting folk with RESPECT documents. A chap I have been supporting was finally granted accommodation after living in appalling conditions. We managed to secure a grant for white goods and the difference this has made to his life is unbelievable. Karen is currently working with "Team around the person" and CDC to ensure the safety and wellbeing of an ex-serviceman looking at more suitable accommodation for him. Recently Karen has been working on more money support with claims for Attendance Allowances, PIPs, Carers Allowance and Pension credit. There has been an amazing outcome for one of our clients who we took to the appeal stage for her PIP. This has now been successful, and she has been paid out in full back and dated to March 2024. Because of this support we were able to provide the client gave us a donation of £500 Karen is continuing with planning for more training sessions coming soon.

Mike asked if any one at the meeting had heard the name of Martin Caller? He was a chap who had suffered a head injury at work as a Firefighter, which affected his capacity. He used to be a very frequent caller at the care shop asking for help and then Karen took him on and saw him every week at the medical practise. Martin recently died and Karen went to his funeral last week, and said it was amazing. As Martin was a firefighter the crematorium was so packed that about 30 people were standing. Martin lived in the Rookery and the Fire Service provided a Fire Engine to transport his coffin and a guard of honour. Owing to his head injury it meant that he could hardly make sense sometimes and I think some people found him difficult to deal with as it took a long time for him to verbalise the reason for his visit. Karen said that the way the Fire Brigade honoured him at the funeral was incredible.

Sometimes it takes a special event for you to be able to recognise what someone has been in their lives and not what they are now Mike thought that was very special.

Linda said she remembered Martin as a frequent visitor to the Care Shop, and he talked about a group he ran over at Bracklesham to teach young guys how to do bricklaying. He was really passionate about doing that as he wanted to teach those youngsters skills to get a job.

Deirdre spoke about how a brain injury can affect people in different ways, but we always say at Alzheimer's, there's more to a person than the dementia. You need to look through the dementia to see the person they were, not necessarily what they are now. That's true of any injury a person may have suffered.

Mike said we just need reminders of that sometimes, you very often only see people as they are now. Its all about respect and dignity. It's knowing that back story.

Deirdre added, this is where knowing a person's back story is so important.

#### **Alzheimer's Deirdre Timney**

Deirdre began by saying she is working, along with her colleagues, ploughing through a load of referrals. There is one gentleman that she needs to discuss with Karen who she saw this week at his home. Deirdre has suggested to him quite strongly that he should attend Ronelle's Thursday Together Time group. He lost his wife not long ago and lives with his daughter, son-in-law, and 3 grandchildren. He's beginning to socially isolate at home and stay in his bedroom. The house is very full. It would be good to get him out and get him to meet more people and do more things as opposed to isolating his bedroom which is not good for anyone.

#### **Befriending – Ronelle Juleff**

Ronelle said there are more members attending Together Time and they have a new couple who are also going to Sunday ResBite Teas. They have joined the Venture Bus so Ronelle will book that to collect them and take them home afterwards. The gentleman has not wanted to go anywhere for quite a while so it's wonderful that they are able to come along together.

There have been quite few Caraway House movie evenings in the past few months and they're holding another one in March. One lady came with her husband, they stayed for the supper, but he couldn't manage to stay for the film. We've offered to loan them some DVD's to watch at home. His wife used to attend the Yoga Group but that no longer meets. His wife also attends Deirdre's Carers Group on a regular basis and would benefit from attending other events.

#### **Karen Pirks Report**

The next Dementia Friend's session is taking place on **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March** at the Cabin, Beacon Church 4.15pm thanks to **Mike Beal** our **Dementia Ambassador**.

## **Importance of knowing the person before the dementia:**

Karen and Sue Ridgewell attended the evaluation of the **My Story, My Future Storytelling Workshop** with Martha Pusey. Martha would like Selsey to be part of the roll out of this.

In the meantime, Sue Ridgewell has been running the **All our Yesterdays** which brings people in from the Care Homes and is supported by **Beacon Church** volunteers and the **Venture Club**- Sue Ridgewell will be running a workshop for volunteers and staff about developing listening skills when working with people with various needs. **Wednesday April 15th**- venue to be confirmed med. Sue has extensive experience having worked in Children's services, Child protection, and supporting older adults with dementia. She is also a Robin befriender keen to support people with their end-of-life journeys.

Turning our communities **Blue for Dementia**- is planned again for May 18<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>. Shopkeepers will again be encouraged to provide window displays to share messages about being a dementia friendly community. Shop keepers in the Wittering's and Bracklesham will also be invited to participate. **Action:** KP will meet to plan with Deirdre, Alzheimer's Society to look at other events during that week across the peninsula.

Karen also talked about the value of Talking Boxes where a postcard or a picture which means something to the person with Dementia and can open conversations about things that are familiar to that individual.

**Care Shop Volunteers/staff** will have workshops on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of March from 4pm. This will update some of the processes to support the work stemming from the Care Shop. The Alzheimer's booklet will be distributed at these sessions (Customer Facing guidance about dementia) and during the Dementia Awareness Week.

Deirdre suggested having a Carers Drop-in some time and invite other organisations to have a table like Solicitors, 4-Sight, Trading Standards etc.

Mike Beal had a great idea he'd seen in Cornwall. He saw wooden objects which were hand carved, and used by people with Dementia to spark conversation and discussion. Mike thought he could discuss this with the Men in Sheds and work something out with them. He will discuss this in our next meeting when he is back from his holiday.

## **✿ Sussex Grange - Home Care Corinna Forsdike**

Corinna was pleased to announce that she had just completed Providers Information Return for CQC, before the deadline.

They are now getting ready for Easter and Paula has already bought the Easter Eggs ready to put into little baskets and a card distribute to their clients. One of our new Carer's whose husband has a Barbers Shop in Chichester raised money from their customers to buy blankets and slip socks for our less well-off clients which was very kind of them. We have more recruitment ongoing. Paula will be attending the Managers meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> March.

Becoming busy with more clients, more care hours, and recruitment is ongoing. They have 73 clients in the community around Selsey, Hunston, Mundham, Runcton, Lavant, Fishbourne. Some are not registered with CQC, and some clients just need companionship and help with shopping and using their phone etc.

### **Rookery Hub**

There is a new Hub opened at The Rookery which runs on a 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday mainly run for the residents. There 3 of us who are helping with different aspects. So, there is Aunty Tech advising and training with using a Smart Phone, Laptop and any IT issues they may have. Bob Patterson is an Energy Adviser and is up to date with all aspects about the best deals to be had or even funding towards energy if needed. He also runs the Veterans/Serving Personnel group and assists with any problems they may have. Linda Edwards helps with form filling, Blue Badges, PIPs, Attendance Allowance and also IT issues. The Hub runs on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday 10-12pm and 4<sup>th</sup> the information Wednesday 10-3pm each month.

### **Any Other Business**

No other Business.

### **Next Meeting Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2026 5pm**