

The most recent BA13+ Partnership Meeting was a well attended event which took place at the Laverton on Wednesday 11th November. As always, a theme was selected from the Community Plan, and it had been decided that this evening would look at Health and Wellbeing issues.

Claire Thomas from **Alzheimers Support** spoke first. They are a Wiltshire based charity working with people with Dementia across East and West Wiltshire. The Alzheimers Society do work in North Wiltshire – the two organisations work closely together. Claire explained that it's not a natural part of ageing – not everyone is going to get dementia. There are over 100 different types of dementia. It's not always easy to diagnose. 2/3 of people with dementia live in the community. Claire explained some of the statistics relevant to this area. The national target rate of diagnoses is 66%. The diagnosis rate in Wiltshire is 61% so it is approaching the target. There are around 300 people living with undiagnosed dementia in this area.

They have a dementia adviser based in Westbury and Warminster. There is a Home and Community Support Service which provides respite and support. There's a café. There's Singing for the Brain both of which take place at the farm in Heywood. There's a safe places scheme (which is run by BA13+).

Claire then went on to explain what being a Dementia Friendly community involves. There are one-hour long dementia friends sessions which anyone can attend. Scouts can now get a badge to show they are dementia aware.

Claire asked what people thought a Dementia Friendly Westbury might look like – what shops might do, what businesses might do, what clubs and societies might do. There was a spirited discussion about what people might or might not want to do.

Chris Heaphy then spoke about the Wellbeing Programme in relation to the **Wiltshire Wildlife Trust**. He is a volunteer worker with the organisation. They work at various sites across the county, notably Middleton Down and Smallbrook Meadow. The mental health and the wellbeing group is intended to help people who might not normally be able to get out through either disablement, addiction or mental illness of any kind to get involved in doing practical conservation tasks. Chris provided an extensive list of those who they help. Their organisation is part funded by Wiltshire Public Health. People are referred by their GP, although people can apply directly online themselves. They have nature reserves in the North, Middle and South of the county. They learn, for example, basket weaving, bulb planting, gutter work, woodland crafts, nature sessions, earthworm surveys, coppicing, felling, fencing, path clearance, outdoor cooking – and the all important tea-making. The work also contributes of course to the wellbeing of the reserves that they are working on. They are also keeping a biological record for Wiltshire and Swindon.

Peter Biggs then went on to give a presentation on **Healthwatch**. The organisation grew out of the PPIF, Public and Patients Information Forum, and subsequently LINK – the Local Involvement Network, both of which became seen as lobbying organisations. Healthwatch Wiltshire is the consumer champion for health care. They are allowed to enter National Health run premises and ask them questions. They ran a series of pilot inspections in care homes last year. They discovered after doing a few of the pilots that most of the scripted questions were redundant. Care Homes are already inspected regularly. However, they did notice that very often the residents themselves weren't asked what they thought. So that's exactly what they did.

Wiltshire Healthwatch is based in Melksham. Wiltshire Council have a Health and Wellbeing Board which Healthwatch also has places on. The organisation have around 50 volunteers, from all walks of life, although most are retired people. The priorities for 2016 are dementia; better care and care in the home.

The date, venue and theme of the next Partnership meeting is to be agreed at the next Steering Group meeting, which takes place on Tuesday 1st December at Crosspoint.

Phil McMullen, for the BA13+ Community Area Partnership