

Health & Wellbeing and Dementia Friends Champions Meeting

2nd November, 1.30pm,

1. **Present:** Cllr Jose Green (Chairman), Liv McLennan, Anne Malleliue, Diana James, Rachel Demery, Liz Woolven, Eamon McClelland, Zoe Brew, Anne Ward-Ongley, Karen Linaker

2. **Where were we?**

The group re-capped from its February 2020, when it had scoped events to mark Dementia Awareness Week in May, which sadly was unable to proceed due to the lockdown. Karen mentioned that the application for funding to bring the Celebrating Age programme to South West Wiltshire had been approved since we had last met. We had previously suggested that a future focus should be on Wiltshire Council's Carers Strategy, and also on community transport. The group agreed that these were still important topics to discuss, but also appreciated that these needed to be considered alongside all the other issues since exacerbated by the pandemic.

3. **Where next?**

The group took time to consider the recent JSNA data and received updates on how the pandemic was impacting upon residents in South West Wiltshire and how this has been supported and responded to by the new neighbourhood support groups. The group felt that the following were of key importance to understand better and respond to :

- Young people's mental health – including that of young carers, and also those who struggle to progress from education to work due to the caring pressures they have to juggle and the lack of support they have from home, leaving some in real financial hardship
- The needs of the vulnerable and elderly that require support so that they can digitally engage and in turn manage their way through times of loneliness and isolation better
- Older people's mobility, bearing in mind the long periods of not being able to get out and stay active, and the consequent physical decline

4. Digital Inclusion projects and initiatives

All felt these to be of high importance, and mention was made of various initiatives by Age UK, Carer Support Wiltshire and others ongoing and since improved because of lockdown. Liv McLennan updated the group about her plans to develop in collaboration with other local CICs a digital inclusion project that will see the distribution of digital equipment to older people including those with dementia.

The key aims of this collaboration were to help older people to gain more confidence and skill in using the equipment for all the things that would help them (shopping, ordering prescriptions, accessing services etc), whilst also increasing the volunteer base in South West Wiltshire of people that can support and coach older people into better use of the digital equipment.

An added bonus to this work would see Liv being able to offer older people creative sessions online to enhance their sense of health and wellbeing.

Karen will circulate the crowdfunding link set up to help Liv's project secure the funding it requires.

5. Supporting Carers

(a) Carer Support Wiltshire: Carers Counsellor initiative had been working with 7 carers (online) over the past 4 months, and in addition a new telephone support service had reached over 50 carers during lockdown

(b) The Make A Friend Be A Friend initiative had been paused because of lockdown, but Rachel and Karen would consider how to restart it over the coming months, including through the set up of a new Face Book page to stimulate interest and better understanding.

6. Isolated Older People this winter

The group discussed how they understood isolation was being addressed, including the various initiatives of services and charities to regularly telephone and check in on older people, the plans from

Celebrating Age, and the local covid-safe activities that community groups and parish councils had planned. Karen agreed to circulate an email to the wider Health and Wellbeing Group and to the C19 support group leads to build a clearer picture regarding isolation during winter

7. Local Support Groups

We discussed which of the South West Wiltshire CA's community groups had been able to get back and up and running (pre the second lockdown), and noted that the following were known to have restarted:

- Broadchalke community hub has reopened for restricted activities and café
- Bowerchalke and Broadchalke Emergency Plan group
- Fovant Village Hall coffee morning
- Bishopstone coffee morning and plan for a Christmas lunch, moviolola, exercise and creative activities, toddlers
- Berwick St John village support groups

Karen to further investigate this at the right time following the end of the second lockdown period.