



Hello everyone,

As I write this, summer still doesn't seem to have made it yet but I hear that, on the basis of a fine St. Swithin's Day and the shift of the Jet Stream, we can look forward to its arrival any day now. However, despite all the rain and changeable conditions, we managed to choose a particularly sunny day for the project's annual garden party which has become something of a much appreciated tradition. Mike and Lyn Rouse once again very generously opened up their wonderful garden and provided a superb buffet luncheon for all those incredible people - volunteers, carers, cared-for, professional supporters, etc - who have freely given their time and money over the last year. It is always a great occasion and this year the sun shone, with over 70 attending and many more wanted to come but, as is the way at this time of year, were on holiday or committed elsewhere. It is just a way of saying "thank you".

Last month I reported on our study to find out how we might encourage those who may be struggling to care for someone, who has difficulty in remembering from one moment to the next, or easily becomes confused, to seek early help and advice. We now know that this research is the first of its kind in the UK and we are seeking to talk to lots of people throughout our community. We want to build up a picture of how we all think about dementia – why we might carry on and, perhaps, not notice the symptoms, why we might resist taking our concerns to the doctor, why we might think that we don't want help, why we are afraid to find out, etc. The important thing about this study is that it is not just about the opinions, experience and views of those family carers and others who have been "touched" by dementia – it is about the whole community. I hope that you will want to feel able to respond if we ask you to help this study and to "make a difference".

Finally, I want to mention that we are trying to support those husbands, wives, partners, sons, daughters, and others who are so committed to caring for someone that they are tied to their house and cannot find a chance to get out and have some "time of their own". Sometimes it is even more important – there is an emergency and they need "someone to be there **and now**", or they have a hospital appointment that they can't attend without having someone who can look after their wife, husband, partner, or parent. So, we are going to set up a team of "volunteer carers" who can "be on call" when needed. They will be given the best training so that they will be able to cope with any situation – this is "The First Responders" of personal care for the elderly frail. I hope that anyone who could offer an occasional 2 or 3 hours to help a family carer in need will think about becoming "one of the team". There are further details elsewhere in this magazine.

If you would like to know more about The Debenham Project, please think about visiting our website [www.the-debenham-project.org.uk](http://www.the-debenham-project.org.uk) where you can access all our newsletters, and much more. If you are a bit unsure how to contact us on the web, please call in at **The Library Resource Centre**, Cross Green, Debenham. A range of leaflets are available at the **Post Office** and don't hesitate to call the **Project Phone Line** 01728 862003.

With my best wishes, Lynden