



## Highlights and Lowlights For 2020-21 & 2021-22

### Highlights:

1. We successfully survived the lockdown and have managed to begin to rebuild the project. The numbers of participants is significantly down but seems increasing towards pre-Covid levels.
2. Our financial status is broadly unchanged and we have sufficient reserves for at least the next year or two.
3. Throughout the pandemic we managed to maintain regular and supportive contact with all our carers and those they care for.
4. We adapted the way we can provide support with an integrated on-line Well-Being package.
5. The University of Suffolk research study was completed.

### Lowlights:

1. 19 deaths of people supported by the Project
2. The closure of care homes to visits by family carers and relatives was heart-breaking and led to the severe deterioration in the health of those living in residential care with dementia.
3. Loss of key volunteers and participants due to health problems – hopefully temporary – leading to suspension permanent closing of 2 lunch clubs and delay in reopening Cameo.
4. Minimal referrals
5. Rebuilding the levels of support that the Project can offer is unlikely to reach the pre-Covid levels before the end of the year.

## Impact Statement for 2020-21

**N.B.** The total figures quoted below are “for the year”.

**Maintaining contact:** Once lockdown was announced all those families and individuals we supported became isolated. Keeping in touch and offering friendly and helpful conversation – someone who cares enough to chat on a regular basis, a source of information, a contact with the community – is special.

Newsletters (Mostly weekly) - 19

Parish Magazine articles (Monthly) – 12

Telephone calls (Weekly) – 250

**Information, advice and individual support:** The project has continued to offer individual information, advice, assistance and signposting. The most important element of this service is “listening”. The Project’s telephone line is open 24/7.

Telephone calls and E-mails (Other) – 40

E-mails (Follow up and info) – 30

Signposting (Dementia Together & other agencies) - 20

**Goodwill activity:** Throughout the year the Project has been active in both helping other local agencies support those who became isolated, and in its own initiatives.

Community Christmas tea boxes (delivery) – 20 recipients

Afternoon cream tea boxes (provision and delivery) – 50 recipients

Garden Café event – 60 guests

Sadly all other events such as the “Day Out at the Seaside” and the “Debenham Project Grand Garden Party” had to be cancelled.

**Other existing services:** The Government social restrictions and the importance of avoiding face-to face contact with vulnerable individuals had a major impact on much of our support. The “One to One” team have been unable to offer the personal contact in the Carers Club and info Café that was a key element of maintaining a relationship. However, volunteers have tried to keep contact by telephone. Providing individual advice on Power of Attorney, Carer Allowances, etc has also been limited.

**Other activities:** Although the impact of the pandemic substantially reduced our involvement in various county and academic activities we continued to support the development of better coverage and quality of support for families living with dementia across Suffolk:

The Project continued to participate in The Suffolk Dementia Forum as the primary body for advocating the viewpoints of carers and cared-for living with the impact of dementia.

The Project was a major contributor to the unanimous commitment of the Suffolk Health and Well-Being Board members to a Suffolk-wide Partnership to actively work towards, not only a Dementia Friendly Suffolk, but also to be proactive in the provision of support services for those living with the impact of dementia on their lives.

**Development:** We created our integrated on-line “Well-Being Support Package” which includes exercise, singalong, nature, and relaxation.

**Recognition:** Since its inception the Project has collaborated with a significant number of the professional and academic institutions with particular interest in community-based dementia support. Currently we are involved in:

Warwick University – “Sustainable Community-based Dementia Support”.

Cardiff University - Specialist contribution to the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of “Community Work”, one of the long-time recognised textbooks on the subject.

**Research:** The Debenham Project has always been keen to explore the field of community-based support for, not only those who are living with the impact of dementia on their lives and well-being, but also for all those in our community who may be living with the chronic illnesses and frailties that are synonymous with an increasingly ageing population. The following project was begun immediately prior to the lockdown at the beginning of March 2020:

University of Suffolk - “Evaluating the Provision, Availability, Cost, and Quality of Health and Social Care for the Elderly Frail in a Rural Community”.

This is a unique collaboration focusing on the overall well-being of elderly persons in a typical rural setting i.e. Debenham and the surrounding area. Unfortunately the epidemic has significantly delayed its progress by an estimated 9 - 12 months.

**Funding:** Despite the pandemic and the absence of any active funding events, the Project's finances remained strong. Private donations continued and were greatly appreciated. The year-end balance was approximately £28K although this includes the commitment of £10K for the University of Suffolk research study.

## Impact Statement for 2021-22

**N.B.** The total figures quoted below are "for the year".

The year has been roughly divided into 2. The first 5 months followed very much the pattern of the previous year with carers Club and Info Café, Cameo, Fit Club, Lunch Clubs, Transport and face to face support suspended.

**Maintaining contact:** Whilst lockdown we continued keeping in touch and offering friendly and helpful conversation.

- Newsletters (Mostly weekly) - 6
- Parish Magazine articles (Monthly) – 12
- Telephone calls (Weekly) – 100

**Information, advice and individual support:** The project continued to offer individual information, advice, assistance and signposting.

- Telephone calls and E-mails (Other) – 20
- E-mails (Follow up and info) – 10
- Signposting (Dementia Together & other agencies) – 5 – 10

**Groups and other Activities:** In September we were able to begin opening up again. However, due to health problems, key volunteers/participants were unable to resume their involvement. This has meant delaying the return of Cameo and the closure of two of our three lunch clubs.

- Carers Club and Info Café (twice monthly) 10 rising to 25 participants per session
- Fit Club (weekly) 10 to 12 participants per session
- Cross Green Lunch Club (monthly) 10 approx. per occasion
- Transport (as required) 10 per month average

**Events:**

Sadly the "Debenham Project Grand Garden Party" had to be cancelled, the "Day Out at the Seaside" proved very successful and well attended. Also, the Project participated in Deb-Fest.

**Other existing services:** For the first part of the year the "One to One" service was unable to offer the personal contact in the Carers Club and info Café that was a key element of maintaining a relationship. However, volunteers tried to keep contact by telephone. Since then providing individual advice on Power of Attorney, Carer Allowances, etc has begun again in a limited way.

**Other activities:** Although the impact of the pandemic substantially reduced our involvement in various county and academic activities we continued to support the development of better coverage and quality of support for families living with dementia across Suffolk:

The Project continued to participate in “The Suffolk Dementia Forum” as the primary body for advocating the viewpoints of carers and cared-for living with the impact of dementia.

The Project was a major contributor to the initiation of the “Suffolk Dementia Action Partnership” to actively work towards, not only a Dementia Friendly Suffolk, but also to be proactive in the provision of support services for those living with the impact of dementia on their lives.

**Recognition:** Throughout the year collaboration continued with professional and academic institutions with particular interest in community-based dementia support.

The final report of “Sustainable Community-based Dementia Support” (Warwick University) to which we provided contributions based upon our experience, was published earlier in the year.

A Specialist contribution for the textbook “Community Work” was completed for the upcoming publication of the 6<sup>th</sup> edition.

**Research:** The research study “Evaluating the Provision, Availability, Cost, and Quality of Health and Social Care for the Elderly Frail in a Rural Community” which was begun March 2020 but was begun immediately prior to the lockdown at the beginning of March 2020, significantly delayed by the pandemic, has been successfully completed.

**Funding:** The project continues to be well supported with individual donations and remains in a sound financial position.