INTRODUCTION

This is the first of our brand new, regular newsletters for Dementia Friendly Rossendale. 2014 was an exciting year and allowed us to get the message of the idea and commitment for our community initiative, out and around the valley. Dementia is a massive concern at a national level not least because it’s impact is not limited to the person with the illness as it often affects family and friends as well. The Alzheimer’s Society predicts the number of people living with dementia in the UK will top 1 million by 2025. We estimate that around 1100 people are living with dementia here in the valley (and not all of those will have had a diagnosis) and it’s consequently easy to calculate the number of people affected by dementia running into 2/3000 when you factor in family and friends who provide domestic and unpaid care and support.

We have ensured that local people have the opportunity to help. We have increased the number of Dementia Friends ranging from our MPs to our young people in secondary schools; whole organisations and businesses are engaged in providing staff with awareness sessions; businesses and public services such as the Fire and Police service are helping with the inclusion of awareness sessions in their respective areas. 2015 offers out more exciting and wider challenges and opportunities for you to help (see the list below) and we want to keep people fully informed with what we are doing so you will see we have website and twitter accounts to help with this. Please come to one of our Community Roadshows – venues to be announced soon – and learn more about Dementia Friendly Rossendale.

Brian Topping
Chair of Dementia Friendly Rossendale

Our Plans for 2015

- Create an overall plan made up of commitments from each member of the Steering Group.
- Create a website and directory of access to local help and support. This is to ensure that people affected by dementia know where they can get practical and helpful advice and support.
- Publish a regular newsletter
- Work more closely with GP’s and primary care specialists.
- Deliver an awareness campaign that will reach all shops, businesses and frontline services in the Rossendale Valley.
- Work closely with frontline services such as buses, taxis, pharmacists, banks and many other organisations.
- Host more community events.
- Provide and make available dementia awareness information at key Rossendale events.
- Increase the numbers of Dementia Friends and “champions” for Rossendale.
- Inspire more people to create new projects and work together. This will include choirs, cafes and other interest groups.
Music Memory Day: Calling all tribute music bands (50s/60s); brass bands and other music groups or acts:
We will be hosting a Music Memory Event during the summer and we are looking for musical acts / groups who would wish to participate in this event. Music plays a crucial role for people living with dementia and remembering melodies; words and even rhythms can have a massive and positive impact on the memory of someone living with dementia. We are particularly interested in recreating the sounds of the 50s and 60s – if you’d like to help, then please get in touch.

People living with dementia and their carers:
We are developing new ideas and plans for the future of Dementia Friendly Rossendale – please see our plans for 2015. We are really keen that people living with dementia are part these plans and if anyone with the illness and their carers feel they could contribute to the development of ideas and projects, then please get in touch.

Dementia Friends Sessions
Anybody can become a Dementia Friend, it’s just about understanding a bit more about dementia and the small things you can do to help people with the condition. Dementia Friends learn a little bit about what it’s like to live with dementia and turn that understanding into action. This could be helping someone find the right bus or being patient in a shop queue if someone with dementia is taking longer to pay. Every action counts.

If you would like to attend a session, please contact Andy Laverty - details overleaf.

Dementia Café
The Dementia Café in Rossendale is held at Annie Peaches Tea Rooms, off Bocholt Way, Rawtenstall after Lambert Mill. As well as being able to enjoy a wonderful selection of treats, the café also offers information and advice but most of all the chance to relax and meet new people who really understand. The café is held from 1.30 pm to 3.30 pm on the third Tuesday of the month. If you would like more information, contact Diane on 01282 657833 or 07507 856437. There is no need to book, just turn up on the day.

Veterans Dementia Group
Do you care for someone that has dementia or have either of you ever served in the armed forces? If so, we at veterans in communities welcome you to ‘pull up a sand-bag’ and come along to our Dementia Support Group – ‘Comrades’. Comrades meets on the 3rd Wed of the month 1-3pm and offers advice, support and the opportunity to get involved with some of the projects at the VIC Centre in Haslingden; Gardening, Arts & Crafts and the Singing Group. For more information contact us on 01706 833180

My name is Paul Leigh and I’m a Police Inspector based at Waterfoot Police Station with responsibility for the policing in Rossendale. I represent the Emergency Services on the Dementia Friendly Rossendale Steering Group. I have used both my formal and informal contacts, seeking the views of colleagues in other emergency services such as the Ambulance, Fire and Rescue and Rossendale Mountain Rescue, in addition to listening to the views of fellow police officers. What has pleased me most is that there is a real enthusiasm to make a difference right across all of the emergency services when it comes to helping people live with this condition. The emergency services have committed to working more closely together on some established initiatives for helping those living with or affected by dementia should an emergency situation occur. These initiatives represent an opportunity to learn from each other and adopt a more integrated approach amongst our group. One of my first commitments has been for all emergency services to set up Dementia Friends Awareness sessions as a first step to foster a greater understanding of the condition.

Dementia Awareness in Rossendale
Dementia Awareness week - In Rossendale, we will be hosting information events at ASDA Superstore in Rawtenstall on 19/20 May. Further details will be available on our website very soon.

Awareness Campaign: We will be distributing awareness leaflets to Rossendale businesses; organisations and community groups which will provide key information about how to help and support people living with dementia that you come into contact with. This is important for customer facing services such as public transport, taxis, shops, banks, pharmacists, and so on.