

Creating a dementia-friendly York

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York Dementia Without Walls: How can York become a dementia-friendly city?

This report has been written with the help of people with dementia who were part of the York Dementia Without Walls project.

It outlines the ideas that are particularly relevant for people with dementia.

What was the project about?

The York Dementia Without Walls project looked into what's needed to make York 'dementia friendly', or in other words a good place to live for people with dementia and their carers.

The team talked to lots of people and organisations in York, including people with dementia and carers.

Why are we talking about dementia-friendly communities?

Supportive communities can help people to live in their own homes for longer.

People with dementia want to be part of their communities. They want to continue to live their lives.

In March 2012, the Prime Minister's 'Challenge on Dementia' included a target to have 20 towns sign up to become more dementia friendly by 2015.

Some findings from the project

Many people with dementia want to carry on as normally as they can for as long as possible. They will persevere as long as they don't have to overcome too many obstacles.

However, many people slowly 'give up' because they worry about the reaction of strangers and there are too many difficulties in their way.

Some people also said that they need more consistent advice, information and support from health and social care services.

Things that would help everybody

Everybody needs to know more about dementia. We all need to talk more about dementia and learn more about the reality of living with dementia.

Like everybody else, people with dementia deserve and expect good customer service. Levels of service could be improved by giving training to people who provide everyday services (for example, banks, shops and transport).

People with dementia should be supported to use leisure, cultural and spiritual resources. People with dementia using these resources want to be treated the same as everyone else.

How people with dementia can get involved

The project found that the voices of people with dementia are very important. Ways in which people with dementia could be involved in making their community more dementia-friendly include:

- People with dementia and carers, together and separately, should be encouraged to get together and share experiences.
- Planners should consult with people with dementia about developments, transport, public signs and new services.
- Ways should be found to encourage people with dementia to identify which services and facilities are dementia friendly.

Four cornerstones

The project identified four cornerstones for planners and policy makers should think about: place, people, resources and networks. The four cornerstones can be found in more detail in the full report.

Acknowledgements

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The full report, **Creating a dementia-friendly York** by Janet Crampton, Janet Dean and Ruth Eley, is available as a free download at www.jrf.org.uk

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