

Guidance for communities registering for the recognition process for dementia-friendly communities

In partnership with



2013

1. Dementia-friendly communities: the background

Across England many cities, towns and villages are now exploring what they need to do to become dementia friendly; recognising the need to act and change to better support people with dementia and enable them to live well in the community. From Preston to Plymouth, Newcastle to Norwich communities are setting out on a journey to transform the experiences of people with dementia and their carers. As part of the Prime Minister's challenge on dementia, Alzheimer's Society and others are working in partnership with members of the Dementia Action Alliance to support communities that want to become dementia friendly.

2. What does it mean to become dementia friendly?

In order to create a dementia-friendly community the views and opinions of people with dementia and their carers must be at the heart of any considerations or decisions.

A dementia-friendly community can be described as:

'A city, town or village where people with dementia are understood, respected and supported, and confident they can contribute to community life. In a dementia-friendly community people will be aware of and understand dementia, and people with dementia will feel included and involved, and have choice and control over their day-to-day lives.'¹

Based on the available evidence it is possible to identify 10 areas of focus that people with dementia want to see in any dementia friendly community and which underpin the definition. This is summarised in the following diagram:

¹ Alzheimer's Society, 2013

Dementia-friendly communities



² Building dementia friendly communities: A priority for everyone, Alzheimer's Society, 2013

3. The journey - how the dementia-friendly communities recognition process developed

Becoming a dementia-friendly community will take a number of years. During this time it is vital that there is a process that enables communities to be part of an officially recognised group working towards becoming dementia friendly. The recognition process will ensure that communities are able to work towards a common and consistent vision based on what we know is important to people affected by dementia and will truly change their experience.

Alzheimer's Society proposed a model for a recognition process, which was consulted on in October and November 2012. This model was based on an analysis of existing evidence, which highlighted the need for dementia-friendly communities and provided early findings on what a dementia-friendly community is, as well as extensive and available evidence and discussion with experts.

The Society launched a pilot recognition process for dementia-friendly communities that tested a set of values and standards. Fourteen early adopters, chosen for their work in leading the way to become dementia friendly, took part in the pilot. Based on feedback we have refined the values and standards of the recognition process to make it easier for communities to get involved. It is envisaged that these, the foundation criteria, will be built on as the recognition process develops.

The journey to become a dementia-friendly community will take time. Working with communities we will develop the necessary standards or criteria to become dementia friendly.

4. How does my community apply to become dementia friendly?

To become part of the dementia friendly communities recognition process, a representative from a community will need to fill out an online application form. This can be accessed through the Alzheimer's Society website:

alzheimers.org.uk/recognitionprocess

By registering for the process your community commits to the following conditions:

- meeting the foundation criteria for a dementia-friendly community that have been developed (please see separate document)
- providing a brief six-monthly update
- completing an annual self-assessment of progress towards the criteria

- providing information on progress on a local webpage or site, for example this could be the local Dementia Action Alliance page
- complying with the terms and conditions for use of the ‘working to become dementia friendly’ symbol.

Once you have submitted your online application form the dementia- friendly communities team will assess it and get back to you within 14 working days and let you know if it has been successful or not. If your application is not successful you will be given advice and information on the things that you need to do to re-apply.

If your application to join the recognition process is successful you will receive information on how to participate. This will include:

- access to the ‘working to become dementia friendly’ symbol and guidelines for how it can be used
- advice and support from the dementia-friendly communities team
- information on the annual self-assessment process
- regular updates from the dementia-friendly communities team.

5. How do we use the ‘working to become dementia friendly’ symbol?

Once a community has successfully registered with the recognition process, the named representative from the community will be granted use of the ‘working to become dementia friendly’ symbol that is date stamped 2014-15 issued by Alzheimer’s Society. They will be able to issue the symbol to organisations and businesses in their community that wish to be part of the dementia friendly communities’ initiative and have stated what their actions will be to towards becoming dementia friendly. A community will have to outline to whom they have issued the symbol as part of their annual self-assessment.



There is separate guidance on how the symbol can be issued and should be used which will be supplied on successful registration. The symbol is trademarked by Alzheimer’s Society and to use it the community and organisations must comply with the terms of use. Alzheimer’s Society retains the right to withdraw that permission if it is felt that the conditions of use have been breached.

6. Measuring progress

An important aspect of taking part in the recognition process is tangible progress. This can be helpful in showing the impact of your work and activities. As a community taking part you will be asked to do this in two ways:

Six-month progress update

All communities taking part in the recognition process will need to submit a brief six-month progress update to the dementia-friendly communities team.

Annual self-assessment

A community will be expected to complete an annual self-assessment which shows what progress has been made and what actions have been taken on meeting the foundation criteria. The method of self-assessment can be chosen by the community but the dementia-friendly communities team will provide you with guidance on how to carry out the self-assessment.

As part of the self-assessment process the community will be asked to notify Alzheimer's Society of the organisations and businesses to which they have issued the symbol. Once the annual self-assessment has been submitted Alzheimer's Society will issue a new symbol for each year a community continues to meet the conditions of the recognition process to become dementia-friendly.

7. Overall governance and monitoring

The recognition system has been developed at this stage to encourage as many communities as possible to join the process and to support progression. The system will be developed in the longer term (over a period of years) to ensure that there is a continuous improvement pathway. This will be achieved by working closely with committed communities and others wanting to be dementia friendly.

8. Further information

For further information on the recognition process please email:

dementiafriendlycommunities@alzheimers.org.uk