



Hello everyone,

The core funding of The Debenham Project amounts to about £8,500 each year. This covers items such as insurance, accommodation, telephone and broadband, postage, office and computing supplies, travel expenses, payments for our professional exercise instructors, volunteers' expenses, printing, and so on. It does not cover any new initiatives that we might want to start in order to further develop our project. All charities struggle to cover their core costs and it is getting more difficult as local authority and NHS support is getting tighter and tighter. Also, charitable foundations mostly prefer to provide grants only for new initiatives, projects, or organisations, and then usually for only for a limited period of a year or so. This is why Suffolk's charities depend upon an army of volunteers in their shops, out on the high street, charity events, fun runs, marathons, and challenges of all types - and why there are number of major charities and a whole industry of professional companies who specialise in fund raising by telephone, e-mail, post and doorstep canvassing to get us to sign up to a monthly payment. I have to say that many of these do seem to have lost sight of the true values of their original founders and risk alienating traditional (mostly elderly) donors by approach.

As you will know, The Debenham Project is a "doing" rather than a "campaigning" charity. True, I do spend quite a lot of time talking with many throughout the local authorities, the NHS, the charities and other organisations in sharing our experiences and in encouraging them to consider how we can achieve a better and more responsive level of dementia support across the county. This is all aimed at providing input which we hope will lead to more informed decisions and is strictly non-political. However, when it comes to the funding of voluntary organisations which are making a significant improvement to the health and wellbeing of those struggling to cope with dementia, I feel that the implied policy of the County Council and other funding organisations of being negative towards contributing to the regular and ongoing costs of community-based charities is wrong. At each opportunity I will try to raise the issue.

As a small local charity, we are by no means immune from the widespread cut backs throughout the health and social care sector. However, we are more fortunate than many because of the tremendous goodwill that has been shown by everyone in our community. Although we do have to chase around and apply for grants the majority of our costs have recently been covered firstly by many, many, generous donations made by families and individuals in and around Debenham (and sometimes from very much further afield), secondly by contributions made by participants in our various clubs and activities, and thirdly through events organised by other community-based organisations who have chosen to support The Debenham Project. On this occasion I would especially like to thank the Russell family for their donation in memory of Mary, and John St. Pier and his family and friends for their generosity in memory of Lilian. Also thanks to Janice and Harriet for the successful table-top at St. Mary's Autumn Fete.

Finally, can you help with our memory boxes – please see Mary Morley's request elsewhere in this issue.

Best wishes, Lynden Phone 01728 862003 Website: www.the-debenham-project.org.uk