



Newsletter - November 6th 2009

The Debenham Project was well and truly launched on the 7<sup>th</sup> October at the Community Centre. We had an audience of over 130. Dr. Paddy Fielder was joined by leading members of the Local Authorities, the NHS and the charities to describe the project and how it will help carers and those that they care for. The goodwill and support from all was wonderful with many generous offers of help from both potential volunteers and professionals. The project was repeatedly described as a model for the rest of rural Suffolk.

The donations for tea & coffee amounted to 27-95p and the Alzheimer's Society were delighted to receive this.

Since its inception only a few months ago, The Debenham Project has put into practice the initial desire "to lets get on and do something". Today those services, which were "only ideas", have come into existence.

Confidential Telephone Support Line	Activities and Social Support Sessions
Food 'n' Friends Luncheon Clubs	Information and Advice Centre
Debenham Project Website	Medication and Pharmacy Support

If you would like to know more please see our display in the Post Office; or ring 01728 862003; or call in at the Library Resource Centre or visit [www.the-debenham-project.org.uk](http://www.the-debenham-project.org.uk). Much more is beginning to be planned.

Our next objectives are to consolidate and develop our initial services, and to explore a number of ideas for new services. Some services, for example Food 'n' Friends lunches, may take a little longer to fully develop because our partners have to organise a number of checks or, like the telephone support line, they involve some initial training but we hope to steadily increase the facilities over the next few months. In the next couple of weeks, we shall be reviewing all the generous offers of help that you and everyone else have made and trying to match volunteers interests to task areas.

A new service will be starting at the beginning of the new year. Within The Debenham Project The Alzheimer's Society and Age Concern will be jointly running a Carers Club and Clinic in Dove Cottage. It will start on Wednesday 6th January in the afternoon and run on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month. The format is not 100% sorted out but, broadly, on the 1st Wednesday there will be a programme of organised events, talks, refreshment, etc. with outreach workers also available for advice. The 3rd Wednesday will be drop-in clinic cafe with more emphasis on individual and formal carer support and interaction. As I say, it's not fixed and the style(s) will develop with time according to what carers want.

I believe that this is something for us all to be proud of, and very grateful for the support that we are being given. Age Concern and The Alzheimer's Society have spontaneously come together to work within The Debenham Project.

The success of the project thus far is all down to the support that everyone has given. From an initial 20 people who said they would help back at the end of April, we now have had practical support and offers of help from over 60.

Now that we are up and running we will need to encourage carers to take up the various services. Its going to be quite difficult balancing a steady scaling up of the project with not over-developing the numbers of participants. We believe that many will be recommended to us through the surgery and the professional support workers. Others you may know of, or, they may contact you directly. We are setting up a simple referral system and you can help by suggesting that anyone who is interested, contact us by one or other of the above approaches.

We have had some very impressive statements of support from the very top of Suffolk County Council:

*I am very pleased to lend my support to the Debenham Dementia Project. Eddy Alcock has told me about all the hard work undertaken by the community to get it prepared.*

*Debenham is so wise to have recognised the increasing challenge of the growing number of people suffering from dementia and also the considerable stress and problems this causes for their families and friends. I have selected The Alzheimer's Society( Suffolk) to be my Chairman's Charity for the year. This means that I can help raise the profile of dementia as well as raise some money for them.*

*I am very sorry not to be able to be with you for the launch but send my congratulations to those who have developed the project and my best wishes for the future.*

*Joanna Spicer (Chair of Suffolk County Council)*

**From:** Heather Keeble  
**Sent:** 12 October 2009 16:06  
**To:** Eddy Alcock  
**Subject:** The Debenham Project

Hi Eddy,

What a surprise an e-mail from me. I hope you are keeping well and still enjoying your new role - I haven't seen you in Endeavour House lately.

I thought I would just let you know, I went to a talk at lunchtime today given by **Jeremy** and **Andrea** and I felt so proud to come from Debenham. They were talking about The Debenham Project and how well Debenham had done to get something like that up and running.

Talk to you soon.

Heather

Heather Keeble

Portfolio Support

Environment and Transport

The talk was given by **Jeremy** Pembroke, Leader of the Council and **Andrea** Hill, Chief Executive. It was a pep talk for staff to alert them to “The New Strategic Direction” and to promote The Debenham Project as an example of our way forward.

And these statements are being backed by a serious intent to provide both financial and professional support. I have every hope that sufficient funding for our first full year of operation will be secured within the next few weeks.

With many thanks and best wishes,

on behalf of The Debenham Project,

Lynden Jackson.