

Dementia Friendly Town



Dementia is a disease that touches everyone's lives and, with a high proportion of the population over the age of 65, New Milton has some of the highest rates of dementia in the country.

To raise awareness of the challenges people living with dementia and their carers face, the Partnership New Milton Town Council joined forces in 2016 to work together to make New Milton a 'Dementia Friendly Town'.

We joined the Alzheimer's Society's Dementia Friends programme, the biggest ever initiative to change people's perceptions of dementia.

Locally we formed a Dementia Action Group, drawing in those who work in the field of dementia, carers and others who were keen to make a difference in New Milton.

Ros Bowles, the Partnership's Town Development Officer, and Joanna Hayward, an administrator for New Milton Town Council, attended a day long course run by the Alzheimer's Society to become Dementia Friends' Champions.

Champions are trained volunteers who encourage others to learn a little bit about dementia. Ros and Joanna started running Information Sessions in the community for members of the public and businesses, inspiring others to help those living with dementia to live well.

Ros runs regular information session at local businesses to make them aware of the challenges that those living with dementia can face when trying to live a normal life doing their shopping, banking, visiting solicitors, dentists, or any other professionals.

The sessions also help businesses understand any physical changes they may need to make in the workplace for those customers living with dementia, or for employees, and to encourage them to create their own Dementia Action Plan.

New Milton was officially launched as a Dementia Friendly Town in September 2016. The event was led by Lawrie McMenemy, former Southampton FC manager and a Dementia Friends Ambassador. Lawrie is passionate about making a difference to the lives of those living with dementia and he was delighted to come along and officiate at the launch.

Bob Lowe of Esther Rantzen's Silverline came along too and spoke most movingly of the years he spent caring for his wife when she had dementia.

Ros continues to work on behalf of the Partnership to raise awareness amongst businesses in the town and to help them with their action plans.

To date, the following businesses and organisations have become 'Dementia Friendly':

1. New Milton Town Council
2. Ocean
3. Breeze Care Home
4. New Milton Memorial Centre
5. Brewers
6. Heppenstalls
7. Lloyds Bank
8. Nat West Bank
9. HSBC
10. Bradbeers
11. Swintons Insurance
12. Handmade New Forest
13. Hays Travel
14. Coastal Bathrooms
15. New Milton Conservative Club
16. Lloyds Pharmacy
17. New Milton Library
18. Spencer Road Surgery
19. The Arnewood Surgery
20. Barton Peplow-Webb Surgery
21. Boots
22. Bake
23. Mallard

If you are interested in being involved with this initiative, attending a Dementia Friends Awareness Session or joining the Dementia Action Group to make a difference, please get in touch.