

## Using your local resources

Older people with dementia often experience social isolation and stigma. The impacts are shared by families and carers and are made worse by a lack of community interaction. By increasing the opportunities for people with Dementia to be an active part of their community these barriers can begin to be broken down and many of the myths surrounding Dementia can be dispelled.

In most places there are already resources that can be employed to help people with Dementia to remain connected to their communities and they will hold most value if you can link them to the interests of the people you are caring for. For example, if they have always enjoyed the company of young people try to incorporate some element of this into the activities you plan.

A few examples of places to connect with:

### Parks and gardens

Making links with your local park can bring immediate benefits, as they may be within walking distance and are likely to be places that residents of care homes are familiar with. Parks are free to enter, are often central to a community and used by a wide cross-section of the population. Parks lend themselves to a variety of activities enabling the individual

preferences to be accommodated.

Building relationships with people who run local gardens can bring enormous benefit to people with Dementia. Gardens are a great source of awareness of the seasons. Time and place can often be challenging for people with dementia to stay in touch with, gardens can offer a subtle way of reminding us all of where we are in the year and what that means to us.

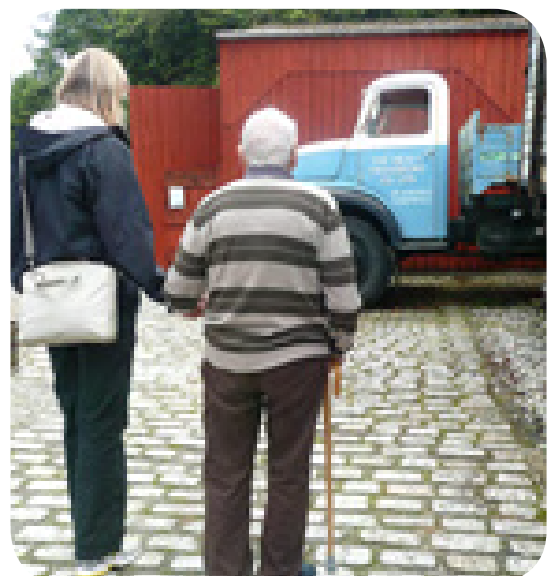
### Garden centres

Garden centres are often good places to visit as many have facilities such as toilets and cafes. It can also be somewhere that you can visit in all weathers and many cater well for a wide cross-section of visitors.

### Young people

From previous community engagement work we know that older people miss the opportunity to engage with younger people. Young people often lack opportunities to contribute to their community. The value of young people spending time with older people and the gains that both receive in return are well demonstrated.

Contact local schools to help out with gardening, reading or taking part in creative activities. Often school groups are



looking to deliver activities that benefit the local community and offer their students confidence-building experiences.

Do you have indoor or outdoor space that could be used by the school, perhaps as a place for the choir or band to practice especially around festivals such as Christmas. If you have no space, is there a bandstand in the park? Be creative.

## Other places

Resources are all around you. Consider your own premises too. There may be parts of a care home that could be used by the community for meetings and events, bringing community life into the home (see our **Care homes in the community** factsheet).

If you run, own or work at a community resource that you think could bring value to the lives of people with dementia contact local care homes, carers groups or organisations such as memory cafes to see what you can offer. If you are unsure of how you might go about offering support and whether your staff or volunteers are capable, training is often available, and often free. You can find groups that will offer training through community drop-in centres, surgeries or by searching the web.

## In brief

- 1 Activities should be matched to the needs and interests of the individuals
- 2 Build lasting relationships with local resources
- 3 Your care home could also be a resource for the community
- 4 Offer guidance if people who run local resources have no previous experience of working with people with Dementia
- 5 Get out and enjoy your local resources!

## Creative Spaces

This information sheet has been produced in collaboration with Cornwall Care as part of the Creative Spaces project

### CornwallCare

*Because we're Individuals*

Cornwall Care promotes people-centred care through their 18 care homes in Cornwall

[www.cornwallcare.org](http://www.cornwallcare.org)



### Sensory Trust

Sensory Trust promotes and supports the creation and management of outdoor spaces that can be used and enjoyed by everyone, regardless of age or ability.

[www.sensorytrust.org.uk](http://www.sensorytrust.org.uk)

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