

Dementia friendly communities

The role of councils

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What is a dementia friendly community?

- Dementia friendly communities are those in which people with dementia have the best possible opportunities to live well.
 - People with dementia have described a dementia friendly community as one that enables them to find their way around and be safe, access local facilities and maintain social networks.
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Councils and dementia friendly communities



Councils have a unique role to play as:

- Local system leaders – with other public sector, private sector and voluntary sector colleagues
 - Local political leaders – representing the interests of their community and residents in council decision making
 - Local public service providers and commissioners
 - The local planning authority
 - Regulators
 - Employers
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Local leadership

There are many examples of where the leadership role of local councils can influence in the development of dementia friendly communities:

- Chamber of commerce – linking with local businesses
 - Health and Wellbeing Boards – bringing together the health and care sectors
 - The development of policy and delivery in public health, housing, social care, planning, street and open space management, etc.
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LGA dementia friendly communities guidance for councils



- The guidance identifies **five** areas where councils can have the greatest influence in the development of dementia friendly communities:
 - **place**
 - **voices**
 - **people**
 - **resources**
 - **networks**
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Place



Councils have significant influence over their own services and spaces and those of organisations who they commission or work with.

For examples, councils can:

- check the **accessibility** of their customer-facing services
 - **work with people with dementia to “walk the patch”**
 - **work with partners** in the creation of accessible and safe “high streets
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Voices of people with dementia

The voices of people with dementia and their carers should be at the heart of dementia friendly communities.

Councils can have much experience and are well placed to hear and represent the voice of local people with dementia, as well as their carers, families and friends.

For example, councils can:

- Ensure that any local consultations on key issues are **accessible** to people with dementia
 - Co-produce policies and services related to dementia with people who have dementia, as they are the **experts**
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People



Councils can contribute to awareness-raising and training to promote more dementia-friendly communities. Councils can:

- support all staff and elected members to become **Dementia Friends**
 - provide additional **training or information** on dementia for staff in customer facing roles
 - develop **employment policies** that include the needs of people with dementia and their carers
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Resources

Councils provide and commission support and care to people with dementia and their carers. In utilising their own resources to support dementia friendly communities, councils can:

- enable **access appropriate post-diagnostic support**
 - use their **public health role** to communicate key messages around risk reduction
 - Involve **all the services** they deliver and provide, from planning to street-cleaning, in the wellbeing of people with dementia
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Networks

Working across a network of organisations can make the wider community more dementia friendly. Councils can:

- set up or join a local **Dementia Action Alliance**
 - sign up for the **Alzheimer's Society Dementia Friendly Communities** recognition process
 - use **strategic drivers** such as community safety plan, HWB strategy to reinforce the needs of people living with dementia
 - encourage local businesses, voluntary & community services to **enable people with dementia to access their services**
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Case Study: Hampshire Dementia Friendly High Street

- a number of towns in Hampshire are working to create Dementia Friendly High Streets.
 - These are businesses that have joined the Hampshire Dementia Action Alliance and have committed to making their shops dementia friendly
 - changes include improving signage and design and providing awareness training for staff
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