

CCIN Policy Prototype Report: Dementia Friendly Burntwood, Burntwood Town Council

- **Project background**

Burntwood is a town with a strong sense of community. The Town Council wants all residents to feel **valued and supported**, so the aim was set in 2019 to become recognised by Alzheimer's Society as a Dementia Friendly Community.

Few Burntwood residents have not been affected by the impacts of dementia. Alzheimer's Society estimates that around **1 in 14 people over the age of 65** are experiencing some form of dementia, a figure set to double by 2040. That's currently around 500 people in our town who are living with dementia, and many more are affected by supporting and caring for relatives and friends.

With a new Council elected in May 2019, Burntwood Town Council stated its clear ambition to become recognised as a Dementia Friendly Community and received support from the CCIN as a policy prototype. The Chair of Council at the time committed to raising funds – and awareness – of dementia charities and a working group was set up, with both Council members and representatives of stakeholder groups and organisations, to scope current issues and agree on a timetable of activities.

Not long into the proposed timetable of activities, the Covid-19 pandemic hit, leading to the postponement of several aspects of the project. During lockdowns, however, the working group continued to meet and grow, with advice and support from a representative of Alzheimer's Society.

- **How the funding was used**

We were keen to involve people living with dementia and their carers directly in our efforts to become recognised as a Dementia Friendly Community, and in 2021, with the support of MHA Communities (South Staffs), we commissioned the Ideas Alliance to conduct face-to-face interviews with local residents living with dementia and produce a photographic exhibition using their comments and photos taken by them.

The 'Through Our Eyes' exhibition demonstrated the challenges of living with dementia, but also illustrated that dementia is just a part of who they are and that it does not define them.

This very powerful exhibition was launched at the beginning of 2022 and received a very positive response and has since "toured" the town including the town library, a local high school and a health centre, thereby raising awareness of the impacts of living with dementia.

- **Project progress**

The work to make Burntwood a Dementia Friendly Community continues and other activities to raise awareness of dementia include:

- A dementia-friendly film night at a local church,
- Planting of forget-me-nots around the town, seed and plant sharing in conjunction with Friends of Burntwood Library,
- Information packs at our monthly market,
- Knitting/crochet project to produce almost 1500 forget-me-nots for display in the town and to create pin brooches,
- The opening of a sensory garden at the Town Council offices for use by day service clients of MHA Communities and open to anyone in the town who need a quiet, tranquil space,
- Engagement (personal visits and letters) with local shops, cafes and other businesses,
- The promotion and availability of tools such as the Herbert Protocol to support people living with dementia who may be at risk of going missing,
- Dementia-friendly seated exercise classes at the local leisure centre,
- A Memory Walk in Burntwood to raise awareness of dementia and local support offers, supported by numerous local businesses and organisations including the Citizens' Advice Bureau, local churches, shops and a Working Men's Club.

As a result of this project, Burntwood received recognition from Alzheimer's Society as a Dementia Friendly Community in April 2022 - but the work to support those living with dementia goes on.



Congratulations!

Burntwood is now recognised as

'working to become a Dementia Friendly Community'!

**Thank you so much for all your hard work in supporting people
affected by dementia.**

-Alzheimer's Society

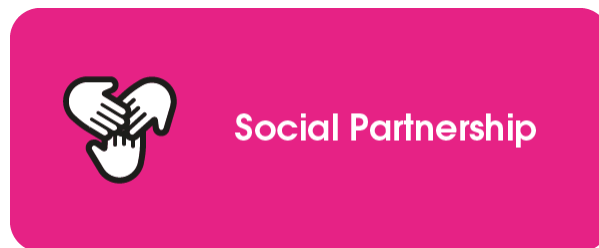
Membership of the working group now includes a representative from the local Primary Care Network (PCN), an additional representative of an agency providing day services for people with dementia and a representative of local Leisure Services. An Action Log records further progress and maintains the focus on changing the local culture and understanding of inclusion and addressing the adverse impacts of social isolation. We continue to –

- Engage with organisations supporting families with children to promote inter-generational understanding,
- Promote access to universal services including, for example, a dedicated dementia-friendly swimming session at Burntwood Leisure Centre,
- Distribute promotional literature and offer dementia-awareness training for interested parties, including local businesses.

We have also ensured that we are learning ourselves – and the Town Council’s newly-refurbished state-of-the-art meeting room has been designed as a dementia-friendly space. We have refurbished the disabled toilet to ensure it also incorporates a dementia-friendly design.

CCIN Principles

The project has been based on and has embedded further the CCIN’s Values & Principles both within the Council and with partners:



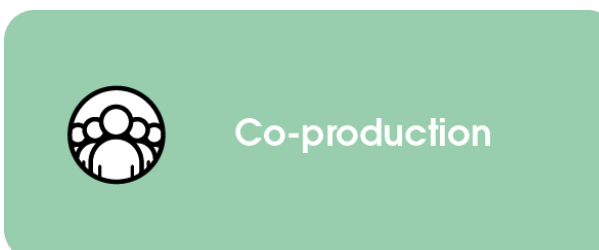
Dementia Friendly Burntwood is a community effort, bringing together the Town Council, local organisations and businesses, and residents affected by dementia.

The recognition we have achieved applies to our community as a result of the work we have done together to ensure people affected by dementia in Burntwood are understood, respected and supported.



Interviews were undertaken with local people living with dementia to create the 'Through Our Eyes' exhibition. Individuals were also supported to take photographs for the exhibition highlighting how dementia impacted them.

As well as the exhibition, the working group conducted a resident’s survey to hear the views and experiences of local people affected by dementia and what they felt needed to change. These views were used to direct the actions the working group took.



Dementia Friendly Burntwood is a community-owned initiative. Burntwood Town Council supports it along with other organisations so everything we do is co-produced. Our working group has an open-door policy whereby any local organisation or resident can be a part of the project and support the work that we do. The feedback determines the working group's actions we have gained from consultation and our aim is for people with dementia to continue to live in the way they want and in the community they choose, and we are guided by that principle.

Councillor Sue Woodward

Leader, Burntwood Town Council

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