



Dementia Friendly Communities

Case Studies: Experiences and insights

Dementia Friendly Communities is an initiative aimed at creating supportive environments for people living with dementia. It focuses on collaboration, community engagement, and continuous improvement to ensure that individuals with dementia and their carers feel understood, supported, and valued.

During the year, we conducted semi-structured interviews with people associated with the project and thematically analysed the responses to summarise people's experiences and the impact of the service.

Positive Carer Experience

- **Collaboration and community engagement:** Collaborative efforts have been key to the success of the initiative.
- **Community-based impact:** A granular, community-based approach has had a positive effect.
- **Enthusiasm and motivation:** People are enthusiastic and motivated about the work being done.

"This more granular, community-based approach has had a really positive effect."

"We have a good, collaborative team, and that's made a big difference."

Pride in the Work Done

- **Small actions leading to big differences:** Small, thoughtful actions have made significant impacts.
- **Building a positive reputation:** Positive feedback and increased confidence among community members.
- **Positive impact:** The initiative has made a real impact on the community.

"It's the little things that make the biggest difference."

"We have a comments book and that has a lot of positive feedback included where people say they feel welcome and that they love coming."

Challenges and Continuous Improvement

- **Acknowledging difficulties and limitations:** Despite limited resources, the initiative has seen positive results.
- **Ongoing adaptation and learning:** Continuous work and adaptation are essential.

"Despite the limited resources, I think we're doing really well."

What worked well

- **Streamlining and simplification:** Making engagement easier for organisations.
- **Collaboration and flexibility:** Working together and adapting to feedback.
- **Community and local engagement:** Focus on smaller businesses and community spaces.
- **Positive outcomes and impact:** Direct, tangible successes in the community.
- **Environmental improvements:** Changes in physical spaces to enhance accessibility.
- **Engagement and support for individuals:** Building connections and relationships.

"We've been able to try new things and adapt flexibly, taking feedback from businesses and from people living with dementia."

"What has worked well is focusing not just on large businesses but on the smaller, community-based places."

Challenges and Learnings

- **Resource limitations:** Insufficient staff and training resources.
- **Business engagement challenges:** Time constraints and support limitations.
- **Lack of clear incentives:** Difficulty in motivating businesses to participate.
- **Engagement methods:** In-person engagement works best, but responses can be unpredictable.
- **Changing situations:** The dynamic nature of the community requires ongoing effort.
- **Resistance to council-driven initiatives:** Some businesses are resistant to council involvement.
- **Language and sensitivity:** Importance of careful language choice.

"From a resource perspective, I'd say we could definitely use more staff."

"I think it works well to be in person, we find sending e-mails has really low return."

"Cardiff, for example, is a very dynamic city... You might think you've got a dementia-friendly area, but then you find the vet has changed hands or a café has closed down."

[The full thematic analysis can be accessed here.](#)