

Tysoe Dementia café - Report for Parish Council Annual Meeting 12th May 2022

We were very grateful to the Parish Council for awarding us £500 to help with setting up the Dementia Café.

We opened in May 2021 after a few months delay due to Covid Restrictions.

Numbers have been slow to build, partly due to Covid and people feeling unsafe to attend any activities or events, but also because a diagnosis of dementia is very often hard to come to terms with on both the part of the person with dementia and their family carer. Often there is a denial that anything is wrong, or the dementia diagnosis is given when the person is still very active and managing to live with little or no support.

So it is often only when the carer is struggling because their cared for person has deteriorated to the point that they can't cope and are in need of help and support that we are contacted.

We have had 18 people with dementia register with the café since we opened and a current regular attendance of 10 of those with all but one person attending with a family member or paid carer. Two people have sadly gone into full time care.

Of the 18 people 9 live in Tysoe. Others travel from Shipston, Wellesbourne, Kineton and as far away as Southam.

This is not unusual as dementia cafés are seen as a welcoming and safe place to take the person with dementia and visit a number of café's over the month in other locations including our other weekly café's in Shipston, Wellesbourne and our monthly café at Compton Verney.

As part of our work, we assist with filling in forms; such as Attendance Allowance and Blue Badges, often these are quite complex and can be daunting for a lot of people which is a barrier to applying. We can also deal with Adult Social Services and some of the support agencies on their behalf.

We have built good relationships with the local GP surgeries, particularly the frailty nurses, and social prescribers and other organisations providing dementia services.

We sit on various committees and working groups to use our personal experiences and knowledge of the key issues and concerns that our café users are facing to highlight and improve care and support for people living with dementia and their families.

Our regular outgoings for the café include hire and heating for the hall, insurance and activities, we have recently bought a number of new jigsaw puzzles, dominoes, books to aid reminiscence and promote conversation and colouring books and felt pens.

We have been supported by the village stores who generously donate the bulk of our refreshments. We also have a donations tin at meetings for contributions.

Over the course of the year we have been supported by donations from several local groups and organisations including Tysoe W.I., Shipston Rotary and Wellesbourne Lions. We also undertook some of our own fundraising by holding a jazz concert in October and a Christmas coffee morning in December. As most of you will know we got married in September and as we did not need any gifts for ourselves, we suggested guests give a donation to support our Dementia work.

We intend to repeat both the Jazz Concert and Coffee Morning, but unsurprisingly we don't have any intention of getting married again!!

Heather & Paul Dowler
May 2022