

Dementia-friendly environments - what are other places doing?

Sharing good practice in from the UK and internationally

Organisations across the UK and abroad are making changes to ensure they are able to provide a positive experience for people living dementia and their carers. There are many ways organisations are doing this:

- Committing to staff training
- Having 'relaxed lanes' in supermarkets
- 'Quiet rooms/areas' in buildings
- Dementia-friendly signage
- Supporting people with dementia to engage with the community

Here are some examples of different organisations that are taking steps to empower and support people living with dementia.

Manchester Airport

Airports can be noisy, busy and rushed. Manchester Airport is working towards improving the experience for passengers with hidden disabilities, such as people living with dementia and their carers.

They encourage people who have hidden disabilities to collect a sunflower lanyard from one of their Assistance



Reception areas to wear throughout their journey. Staff are fully trained to recognise the lanyard and know that people wearing them may need additional support and understanding.

“Without exception the sunflower lanyard was recognised and responded to with kindness and support... they must have been very well trained because we didn't ask for anything, assistance was just offered.” M Terry (Sheffield, May 2021)

Manchester Airport also offers a 'Sunflower Room', which is a quieter room away from the busy crowds and bright lights. Manchester Airport has addressed some of the issues that could have an impact on someone's overall experience and has taken steps to make the flying experience a more positive one.

Houou Cafe & Uji City, Japan

Houou Cafe is based in a multi-story building in Uji City. Within the building there are a number of services for people living with dementia, such as a doctor's surgery, care home and Day Centre. The building looks quite clinical from the outside, yet despite this the café is welcoming, inviting and has a relaxed atmosphere. The café is open to the public but is often used by people after their doctors appointment or to visit with family members in the care home and because of this it is extremely supportive for people with dementia.

The room is spacious and has conversation prompts, activities and books for customers to engage with. Staff are dementia trained and work to create a supportive environment for all customers. There is also a health professional that works from the café on certain days and is available to speak to customers with concerns or queries about dementia. The aim of this is to provide advice and support in an informal environment.

There is a dementia-friendly activity programme that includes singing groups, sewing and fitness. The café also hosts regular talks, presentations on dementia, and can be used by dementia groups as a venue to socialise. The environment, trained staff and activities all make this a dementia-friendly and welcoming café.

Days BLG, Japan

'Days BLG' is a dementia Day Centre based in Machida City. Mr. Maeda, the Day Centre founder, set up DAYS BLG after finding that many people with a dementia diagnosis felt they were not supported to be active and engaged in their community. Days BLG provides volunteering and work-like opportunities to people with dementia in the local area. The Day Centre model means local businesses, organisations and the community are involved in creating purposeful activity opportunities for people with dementia.

DAYS BLG is in partnership with organisations, businesses and the local community. The Day Centre members engage in small group activities in the community each morning and afternoon, which include:

- A local HONDA car dealership where members help car wash
- A newspaper that members help to deliver in the local area
- A national relay race, RUN TOMO. Members help with packaging
- An after school pop-up sweet shop which is run by members
- Using local businesses and services such as shops, karaoke bars and local parks

There are visible benefits not for those attending the Centre but for the wider community. Days BLG find that when organisations are first approached to be involved in the project they are reluctant to engage. However, as soon as organisations get involved they quickly realise the benefits on both a societal and organisational level. In addition to working with organisations, Days BLG also holds regular coffee mornings for local residents as a way to inform them about what is happening at the Day Centre. Days BLG is an example of how, with the right support, people can live well and in a way they want. Days BLG and its members challenge the stigma around dementia and help raise awareness and understanding.



More information

For more information on supporting people with dementia in Sheffield:

Visit www.ageuk.org.uk/sheffield and find "Dementia services" within "Our services"

Call Age UK Sheffield on (0114) 250 2850

E-mail dementiaadvice@ageuksheffield.org.uk

To find out more about how to be dementia friendly contact sdaa@ageuksheffield.org.uk