

Sheffield Dementia Action Alliance

A circular graphic element consisting of a solid teal circle surrounded by a white ring with a dashed outer edge.

A comprehensive guide for organisations
helping to make Sheffield dementia friendly

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What is Sheffield Dementia Action Alliance?

Sheffield Dementia Action Alliance is working to establish Sheffield as a dementia friendly city.

We work together with organisations, services and individuals to increase awareness and understanding of dementia.

Our current members include businesses, local shops, banks, emergency services, social groups, lunch clubs, hairdressers, theatres and more. They are all making a difference!

Small changes can have a big impact on a person's life. We know that every organisation is individual, and we will support you to explore the changes that would be most suitable.

How the SDAA will support you

Sheffield Dementia Action Alliance provides:

- **FREE** guidance, workshops and resources for organisations and individuals with the aim of creating safe, inclusive spaces for people with dementia.
- **FREE** training opportunities for staff or volunteers.
- A **FREE** audit of your organisation/individual environment and guidance as to how your space can become more dementia friendly.
- Invitations to regular member workshops.

SDAA is proud to share your successes and commitment to becoming dementia inclusive by displaying your organisation on our Age UK SDAA members list alongside a certificate celebrating your achievements.

Becoming a member allows you to join a growing community of support. Your membership will show that your organisation is committed to making Sheffield a city that is accessible and supportive of everyone affected by dementia.

How to become a member

To join the SDAA you will need to complete a simple application form and then an action plan.

The application form allows us to contact and support you to complete your initial action plan.

The action plan simply helps you outline what you would like to achieve through becoming a member of the SDAA.

By joining the SDAA your organisation will be joining a network of community, faith, business, voluntary, charity and statutory organisations committed to raising awareness and reducing the stigma associated with dementia.

Please try to commit to a small number of pledges (action plan) for your organisation to develop dementia friendly services and tell us what you're doing. We can then support you to achieve these goals and review them annually to support you on your journey to becoming a dementia friendly organisation.

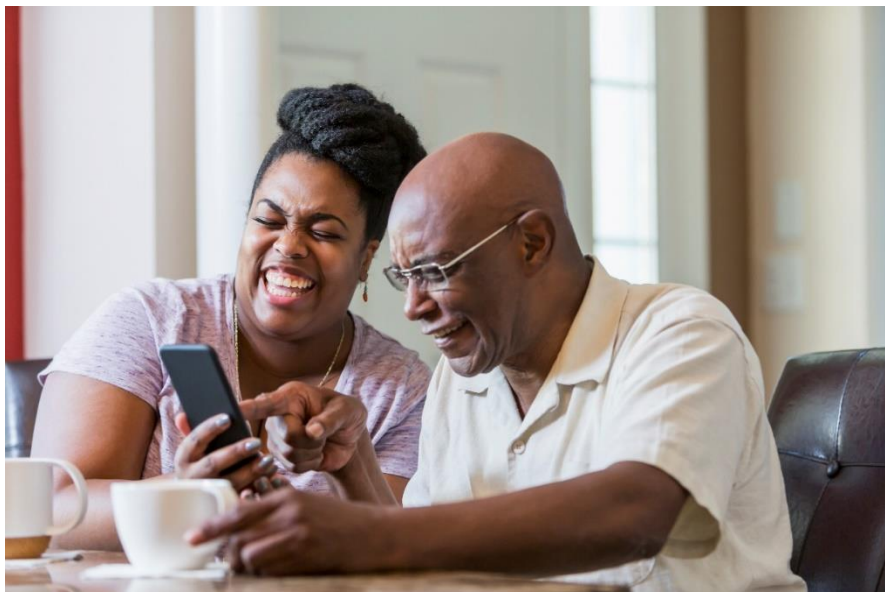
To help you complete these forms, we have an example action plan for you to view which will help give you an idea of what other members have decided to work towards.

We are on hand to offer you support and guidance with setting achievable targets.

Please use this link with all relevant information and forms to sign up as a member <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/sheffield/our-services/sdaa/membership/become-a-member/>

Application form

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/sheffield/our-services/sdaa/membership/become-a-member/sdaa-application-form/>



Sample action plan

Suggested action areas	Your actions/pledges	When are you aiming to do this?
<p>Dementia-friendly services <i>How can you make it better for your customers who have dementia to use your services?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will encourage and support the staff and volunteers who provide activities, support events, deliver presentations and workshops to attend the dementia STARS training sessions. 	
<p>Dementia-friendly spaces <i>How can you adapt your building to be more dementia-friendly?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will use the environmental checklist to work out how dementia friendly our premises are, then create a plan of action to make improvements to the areas that do not meet the criteria. • When we have made improvements, we will involve and encourage our clients and colleagues who are affected by dementia to help us review the progress we have made and highlight any further improvements we could make. • We will provide a welcoming and dementia friendly environment for patients, service users, carers and families. 	
<p>Dementia-friendly workplaces <i>How can you support staff who may be experiencing memory loss or caring for someone who has dementia?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will run creative workshops and explore issues around dementia to create engaging conversation and raise awareness, tackle misconceptions and generally open a wider conversation. • We want to increase awareness and knowledge of dementia, both among our staff and our wider community. 	

What is a dementia friendly city?

At the SDAA our goal is to make Sheffield an inclusive and accessible city for all those affected by dementia. A dementia friendly city can be achieved by ensuring that people with dementia:



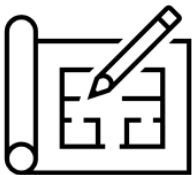
Receive quality healthcare and support

A person with dementia may have many interactions with healthcare and support. It is our role in a dementia friendly Sheffield to support excellent standards.



Are understood and supported

As a dementia friendly city, people with dementia should feel included and their experience understood by everyone in the community.



Are involved in conversations

In a dementia friendly Sheffield all types of organisations will support people affected by dementia. It is important to get feedback from those affected which will then be used to help improve services.



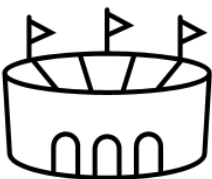
Can travel safely

A dementia friendly Sheffield aims for people with dementia and their carers to easily access and travel to places that are important to them, such as shops, theatres, social groups and appointments.



Feel confident to access their high street

A dementia friendly Sheffield enables people with dementia to continue to do the things that matter most, accessing the high street is one of them.



Can access arts, culture and leisure

A dementia friendly Sheffield looks to enable equal access to all aspects of leisure for people living with dementia.

How to make Sheffield a dementia friendly city

Receiving quality health, care and support

- Make links with GP surgeries and become an organisation they refer to.
- Simplify the care pathway for people you support.
- Educate your staff and volunteers in navigating through the dementia system in Sheffield.

People with dementia are understood and supported

- Consider access to your organisation.
- Train your staff in understanding dementia through the Sheffield Dementia Advice Service (DAS).
- Explore your services and look at whether they support people living with dementia well.

Involve people with dementia

- Consider having focus groups for people living with dementia to gather feedback on your organisation.
- Ask a person with dementia to be part of your organisation's governance.
- Implement changes based on a person with dementia's experience.



People with dementia can travel safely

- Consider how people with dementia can get to your organisation.
- Feed responses about transport experiences back to the provider and to the SDAA.
- Share dementia travel aids such as the sunflower lanyard and communication cards.

People with dementia feel confident to access their high street

- Explore the environment of the high street and whether it is inclusive for people with dementia.
- Understand the barriers to the high street from people living with dementia.
- Work together to minimize the barriers people with dementia face.

Access to arts, culture and leisure

- Consider the environment. Is it appropriate for a person with dementia?
- Look to make all activities accessible to a person with dementia.

Helping a stranger who seems lost and confused

A dementia diagnosis can cause a person to lose their navigation skills and their ability to recognise familiar places.

It is common for a person with dementia to become lost or disorientated about where they are. This is likely to be a scary and confusing time for them and a worrying time for their family, friends or supporters.

With the right support of the local community a person with dementia can be helped to get home safely and quickly.

There are steps that can be taken by members of the public, local businesses, neighbours and the wider community that will have an impact.



The more people in Sheffield who are aware and understanding of how to help, the safer the city will be for people living with dementia.

Why might a person with dementia be lost or disorientated in the community?

A person with dementia could become lost in their community for many reasons.

- They might leave the house with a particular goal in mind, such as going to the post office or local shop, and suddenly not recognise where they are.
- They might be looking for something or someone familiar and find themselves in an unknown area.
- They might be bored or anxious and on leaving the house suddenly find themselves unsure about where they are going.

How each person will respond in each situation will be different. A person may ask someone walking by for help, they might keep walking in the hope they find somewhere or someone that looks familiar or could end up in an unusual place.

It can be a distressing time for them, their family, carers and friends. At these times, the awareness and support of members of the public will make a difference in getting someone home safely.

How can you help?

While it might not be clear if a person is disorientated, you might notice something that appears unusual. The person might appear confused or anxious. They might have left the house unprepared. They could be wearing inappropriate clothing such as wearing pyjamas, a t-shirt on a cold day or carrying something unusual.

While every situation will be different, it is worth thinking what you would do if you were in the position to support someone who appeared lost and confused.

1. **Communication**

Keep your tone of voice friendly and calm. Body language also has an impact so stay relaxed. When talking, make eye contact and speak clearly. You might notice they are confused about what you are saying or where they are. Use simple language and if the person doesn't understand you, rephrase what you are saying but avoid asking too many questions at once. Listen to what the person is saying and give them your full attention. They may need time to process what you have asked.

2. **Let them know you are going to help** them and help get them home.

3. **Dial 999 to tell police you are with someone lost, confused and vulnerable.** The person might have a "help card" in their pocket, which will have details of who to contact in an emergency.

4. **Stay with them** in a public place, such as a cafe or park.

5. **Reassure the person** and let them know that someone is coming to take them home. Smiling and being at ease will have an impact.

How to help people in your community at risk of getting lost

You might work with someone affected by dementia, have a neighbour or support a customer who you are concerned could get disorientated or lost.

Here are some steps you can take to help them stay safe in their community:

1. Encourage them, family or friends to complete a Herbert Protocol. This is a national scheme that encourages carers to compile useful information that can be used if a vulnerable person later goes missing. It can be hugely distressing for families and friends if a person goes missing so it is advised for the Herbert Protocol to be completed after a diagnosis, rather than at the time of an emergency.

The form can be found here on the [South Yorkshire Police website](#)

2. The person might consent to neighbours and people in the community being told about their diagnosis. In this case local shopkeepers, groups or neighbours might be asked to contact a family or friend if they see the person walking in the area. If the person doesn't give consent, their diagnosis should only be disclosed if in their best interest.

3. The power of social media. Families and friends may share posts on local groups and missing persons groups if their loved one has gone missing. South Yorkshire Police also uses social media. Sharing posts to online groups in your local area might help a missing person get recognised. However, remind family, carers and friends to carefully consider how much information they share. The missing person might not want people to know they have dementia.
4. Increase awareness. You, your colleagues or neighbours could complete training to increase awareness of dementia. More understanding and awareness of dementia will better equip everyone to understand, communicate and support a person with dementia.
5. Encourage the person with dementia to carry identification and details of who to contact in an emergency. The Alzheimer's society have a 'Help card' that will assist with this.
6. GPS devices can give reassurance to both the person with dementia and their family member if they are concerned about getting lost.
7. Ask if someone is OK if you feel safe to do so.



Creating a dementia friendly workplace

The number of people in employment and affected by dementia is rising. As a result, employers are focusing more than ever on their approach to dementia and in supporting their staff. The benefits of this impact not only the employees but the organisation as a whole. It creates a working culture where all staff are valued, helps retain experienced and skilled staff, makes the workplace inclusive for everyone and fulfils a legal duty.

If you are an employer, manager or lead a team in an organisation, the sections below will advise you on how to create a dementia friendly workplace and support your staff who are affected by dementia.

Communication

- Create a workplace where staff know where to go if they want to discuss any issues and concerns, such as a dementia diagnosis or carer stress.
- Provide a quiet and private area to have these conversations.
- Staff should feel confident that they can confide in their lead, manager or employer and feel supported when having difficult conversations.

Awareness and understanding in the workplace

Demonstrate your workplace is supportive of people affected by dementia. The more awareness and understanding your staff have of dementia, the less stigma there will be.

To spread awareness and understanding you could:

- Arrange training or workshops to better understand dementia for yourself and employees. Look into arranging Dementia Champions training or sending a member of your team on relevant Dementia Advice Sheffield training.
- Include dementia-related information on staff noticeboards and newsletters.
- Revisit your organisation's HR policies and procedures and give clear policies about how your organisation supports people who develop dementia. An employee might receive a dementia diagnosis and be inclined to check the company policy around dementia before informing you. Check this is easily accessible.



- Assign an organisation 'mentor' or 'dementia lead'. They might give support to employees affected by dementia, arrange training opportunities for staff or attend relevant Dementia Advice Sheffield training.
- Contact the SDAA for any advice around making your workplace more dementia friendly.

Supporting employees living with dementia

People are being diagnosed at a much earlier stage in dementia, with many being in employment. In the UK over 42,000 people are living with young onset dementia (diagnosed under the age of 65) with 18% continuing to work after a diagnosis.

An employee might have difficulties in performing certain tasks and duties but with support and flexibility they can be supported to continue working.

You should:

1. Discuss with your employee their diagnosis and work together to make adjustments so they can continue to work for as long as possible. This will be different for everyone. If your employee agrees, involve their GP or Occupational Therapist to support them in the most effective way.
2. Review how your employee is managing their role and responsibilities at agreed dates. If changes in their role and responsibilities need to be made show you have a flexible, responsive and positive approach.
3. Remember it is your employee's decision when they would like to tell colleagues. Increased workplace awareness and understanding will make this easier as colleagues will be well informed about dementia.
4. Record all discussions and plans agreed by you and your employee and share this information with them. Some people with dementia benefit by having information both verbally and visually.
5. Check support in place and direct to other services. They may need emotional and practical support.

What adjustments could you make?

Although dementia is likely to affect a person's ability to do certain tasks, many skills are retained, often for a long time. Adjustments will help make certain tasks easier to complete. It is important to work with each individual to discuss what would make a difference to them. Under the Legal Act, employers also need to show they are making 'reasonable adjustments'.

These adjustments could be to:

- Present information through multiple modes e.g. written instructions as well as verbal.
- Encourage the use of memory aids e.g. checklists and voice recorders.
- Provide flexible hours or allow staff to take more breaks as required.
- Provide appropriate re-training opportunities.
- Support a member of staff to become a 'mentor' or 'dementia lead' to regularly check in and support with any concerns.
- Look at your working environment and complete a dementia friendly environment checklist to help you assess the building and make it as inclusive as possible. You might consider re-organising the workplace to create a quiet area, look at signage and labelling and modify lighting as required.
- Contact Our Dementia Commitments if you have case specific questions around supporting staff.

Supporting employees caring for someone with dementia

The number of people in employment and caring for a parent with dementia or a partner with young onset dementia is rising. Becoming a carer typically involves taking on new responsibilities and roles which can impact all areas of life including work.

There can be many mixed emotions that come with being a carer. It can be positive and rewarding but can be mentally and physically exhausting, especially when balancing work.

What actions could you take?

By supporting a carer you will be demonstrating that their experience and skillset is valued and that you are accommodating to their needs. This is likely to have a big impact on their wellbeing and the work they do.

To support a member of staff, you might:

- Offer flexible working arrangements such as remote working or flexible working hours. Consider compassionate leave.
- Sign-post to other services. You could do this in newsletters or on staff noticeboards. Familiarise yourself with other services such as the [Cares Centre](#).
- Offer practical tools to help employees build personal resilience and manage stress e.g. training around resilience.
- Contact specialist dementia services in Sheffield to get advice on supporting an employee who is caring for someone with dementia.
- Contact the SDAA to discuss other ways your organisation's workplace can be more Dementia Friendly.



Dementia friendly environment checklist

Where possible your business premises should be as dementia friendly and inclusive as possible. Below is a checklist. This list is not exhaustive so don't be put off if you cannot tick them all. If possible, speak to people living with dementia and ask them how they find your premises.

Quiet space

- Do you have a quiet space for someone who might be feeling anxious or confused? A few minutes with a supportive person might be all that's needed.

Signage

- Are signs clear, in bold face with good contrast between text and background?
- Is there a contrast between the sign and the surface it is mounted on? This will allow the person to recognise it as a sign.
- Are the signs fixed to the doors they refer to? They should not be on adjacent surfaces if at all possible.
- Are signs at eye level and well-lit?
- Are signs clear images or icons?
- Are signs placed at key decision points for someone who is at the building/area for the first time?
- Are signs for toilets and exits clear? These are particularly important.
- Are glass doors clearly marked?
- Is information clearly displayed on public facing notice boards?
- Do you have analogue clocks displaying the date and time?

Lighting

Good lighting can prevent falls and other accidents for people with dementia. Low lighting may impact what someone can or cannot see and add to any confusion.

- Are entrances well-lit and make as much use of natural light as possible? Avoid using areas with bright light or deep shadows.
- Is there extra lighting by stairs and toilet areas?

Flooring

Ideally flooring will be smooth, matt, and level without reflections.

- Are floors matt in colour without reflections and deep shadows? Reflections can cause confusion.
- Are carpets plain in colour without bold patterns? Plain surfaces are easier as patterns can cause problems for people with perceptual problems.
- Are changes in floor finish flush rather than stepped? Changes in floor surfaces can cause some confusion due to perceptual problems. If there is a step at the same time you also introduce a trip hazard.

Changing rooms and toilets

- Do you have a unisex changing room (where applicable) where a carer or partner can help if the person needs help with their clothes?

- Do you have a unisex toilet or other facilities which would allow someone to have assistance without causing them or other users embarrassment?
- Are toilet seats a contrasting colour to the walls?
- Are the rest of the toilets colour contrasting?

Seating

- Do you have a seating area where people are waiting? This can be a big help.
- Does your seating look like seating? People with dementia will find this easier (for example a wooden bench would be preferable to an abstract, metal, Z-shaped bench).
- Do you have wheelchairs (or reasonable alternatives) provided and placed near entrances for ease of use?

Navigation

- Do you have landmarks around the building to help people navigate? Research shows that people with dementia use “landmarks” to navigate their way around, both inside and outside. The more attractive and interesting the landmark (which could be a painting, or a plant) the easier it is to use it as a landmark.
- Do you have a sensory map for people attending your buildings?

You should be aiming for as many as possible to ensure your environment is dementia friendly.

For a specific audit of your environment please contact the SDAA to arrange a meeting.

This is just the start of making your environment dementia friendly. For the next steps contact us at sdaa@ageuksheffield.org.uk.

SDAA acknowledges the Alzheimer's Society for the Dementia Friendly Environment Checklist which we have adapted.

Contact Us

If you do have any other questions surrounding the work the SDAA does please do not hesitate to reach out. We are happy to answer any questions you may have!

You can call us on 0114 250 2850 or email us at sdaa@ageuksheffield.org.uk

X @sheffdaa

Facebook @ageuksheff

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