

# MAKING YOUR AREA A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

*Dementia friendly communities transform our villages, towns and cities into better places to live for people with dementia and their families*

Local government plays a critical role in all our lives. Your council is responsible for **promoting the interests of your community** and the general development of your area, from community planning and development, to service delivery, housing, roads, education and health, as well as recreation and leisure activities. In the local elections on the 23rd of May you will be asked to vote for your preferred local council candidates.

We are asking candidates to work towards **making your area a dementia friendly community**. This echoes the call we made to government to include Dementia Friendly Communities as a priority in the forthcoming *National Dementia Strategy*, a national 5-year plan for people with dementia and their carers.

## Dementia Friendly Communities are ones that include people with dementia and their carers



*I don't want sympathy. I can still do loads of things. Engage with me.*

**Helen, person with dementia.**

*The local groups help me to stay connected and give me a safe haven giving me the confidence from which to venture further.*

**Frances, person with dementia.**

Dementia is a condition that affects every community across the country. Decision-makers in these communities must work to support people with dementia, their families, friends and carers.

## The ASKS

### How can elected councillors deliver Dementia Friendly Communities across Ireland?

#### Tell them they can:

- Support their local Alzheimer Society Services by making themselves known and attending events. They can host an Alzheimer's Society tea day event or provide premises to The Alzheimer Society rent free or at a reduced rate.
- Raise awareness of dementia in their community by inviting people with dementia and carers to speak to members of the County Council. By organising an information session or event for the general public. By working to increase awareness of the needs of people with younger onset dementia, those aged under 65.
- Ensure the voice of people with dementia is heard in local decision-making. By ensuring people with dementia are represented on the proposed Older People's Councils, Age Friendly Counties and other local governance structures.
- Include people with dementia in arts and recreation activities in the community and facilitate events for people with dementia and their carers.
- Recognise the needs of people with dementia and their carers in communities by supporting community based services and home care at a local level.
- Respond to the needs of people with younger onset dementia in the community. Support the development of appropriate community-based services, social inclusion and supported employment measures that address the needs of people with younger onset dementia.

## MAKE YOUR AREA A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY NOW!

Visit [www.alzheimer.ie](http://www.alzheimer.ie) to find out more about the national Dementia Friendly Communities initiative.



THE ALZHEIMER SOCIETY of IRELAND

## The ASKS

- Support your local Alzheimer Society Services
- Raise awareness of dementia
- Ensure the voice of people with dementia is heard by decision-makers
- Ensure people with dementia are included in arts and recreation activities
- Recognise the needs of people with dementia and their carers
- Respond to the needs of people with dementia under 65 years

## CASE STUDIES



Members of The Alzheimer Society of Ireland Donegal Branch with former Mayor of the County and Donegal County Councillor Frank McBrearty.

Members of The Alzheimer Society **Donegal Branch** were invited to present to Donegal County Council. This was a fantastic opportunity to raise awareness of dementia; increasing councillor's understandings of dementia and the services available in the county. A great way of promoting the **Dementia Aware Donegal** initiative.

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland worked in partnership with the **Age Friendly Towns** initiative in **Foxford, Co Mayo** to secure agreement for a new day care and resource centre for people with dementia. A local councillor canvassed the County Council and a site in the town was allocated. The project is not only providing additional resources for people with dementia and carers in the area, it is also starting a larger conversation about dementia in Foxford.

### Dementia in Ireland

**DEMENTIA** is an umbrella term used to describe a range of conditions which cause changes and damage to the brain. These changes significantly affect a person's quality of life, changing their memory, thinking, language and their ability to perform everyday tasks.

### Key Facts About Dementia

(ref: Cahill et al, 2013)

- The main form of dementia is Alzheimer's disease
- There are 48,000 people living with dementia in Ireland
- This figure will increase to 68,216 people in 2021 and to 132,000 people by 2041
- 63% of people with dementia live at home
- There are approximately 50,000 dementia family carers in Ireland
- The first *National Dementia Strategy* is due to be published this year

### About The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (ASI)

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland was founded in 1982 by a small group of people caring for a family member with Alzheimer's or a related dementia. Today we are a national voluntary organisation with an extensive national network of branches, regional offices and services. Our vision is to ensure that no-one in Ireland goes through dementia alone, where policies and services respond appropriately to the person with dementia, and their carers, at the time they need support.

### The ASI has services in every county in Ireland.

#### In 2012 we delivered:

- 260,000 hours of home care
- 560,000 hours of day care
- 163,000 hours of respite care
- We also run support groups and social clubs for people with dementia and carers across the country

### CONTACT US:

Alzheimer National Helpline: **1800 341 341**

[www.alzheimer.ie](http://www.alzheimer.ie)

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