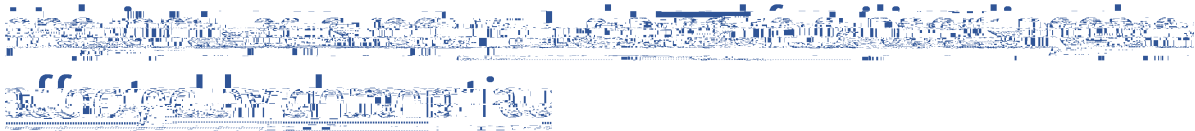


Meeting Centre?



At the Meeting Centre, people with dementia and their family carers can meet and talk to others who are going through similar experiences.

At the heart of the Meeting Centre is a social club where people meet to talk, share experiences and have fun. People can meet with others who have similar experiences and discuss their own experiences.

Why do Meeting Centres start?

Meeting Centres were first set up in the UK in 1990. Since then, they have demonstrated that Meeting Centres have positive impacts on people with dementia and their carers.

What goes on in a Meeting Centre?

Trained staff in the Meeting Centre provide an enjoyable and exciting programme for both the people with dementia and their family carers. The social club meets regularly, usually 3 days per week for 15-20 members per day.

All activities are designed to help people adapt to the challenges that living with dementia can bring. This includes a chance to meet other people, to be creative, to eat, drink and to have lunch.

Everyone brings their skills and talents to the Meeting Centre and the programme is driven by what people want to do. People attend as little or as often as they need.

"It's the day to day activities that they do, people, having their lunch with people. All the things that you don't do on your own, you don't take part in"

Family carers can meet with practical and emotional issues, as well as being able to take a break from their caring role. Social activities and excursions also help people to enjoy life together.



Adjusting to Change

Living with dementia is a huge challenge to come to terms with. If people make good emotional, social and practical adjustments following diagnosis, it is likely that they will experience fewer distressing symptoms and be able to live their lives more fully. Support for families and carers affected by dementia is often fragmented. People often feel overwhelmed and confused about where to get help. Meeting Centres are a way of support on a local level to act against this.

A Meeting Centre supports people by helping them cope with the consequences of living with dementia as an individual.

- Firstly, it helps people to gain a better understanding of their changing symptoms and how to deal with them.
- Secondly, it helps people to get back on an even keel, preserve a positive attitude, and prepare for and deal with the uncertainty that dementia brings.
- Thirdly, it helps people adapt socially by developing and maintaining good social contacts with family and professional services.

*“...the things
with other people who are in exactly the
same boat as you are, and they understand”*

What's the evidence that Meeting Centres help people?

International and UK research that people attending Meeting Centres experience a greater feeling of support and belonging than those who don't attend. Those who attend more regularly show fewer of the more distressing symptoms of dementia and a greater feeling of support. Family carers also experience less burden and stress. People who attend Meeting Centres, seeing it as an important way of keeping active and feeling supported.

Community Engagement

Many towns have initiated Dementia Friendly Communities. Meeting Centres build on this. They generally start from a care organisation or group of people recognising that there is a need for more structured support for people affected by dementia in a local community. It is not really important who comes up with the idea to initiate a Meeting Centre, because collaboration with other organisations is essential to getting the initiative off the ground. There is a well-developed process for developing and implementing new Meeting Centres that can be applied elsewhere throughout.

Find out more about Meeting Centres

- Please contact Meeting Centres UK at meetingcentres@worc.ac.uk
- <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/discover/3/meeting-centres>
- For further information and resources, please visit <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/discover/3/meeting-centres>