

# Walsall becomes a dementia-friendly town



People in Walsall with dementia can now be assured of excellent support and treatment after a number of local organisations have been awarded ‘dementia friendly community’™ status.

Sixteen shops and businesses have joined the ongoing initiative, which is being delivered by the Alzheimers Society and by Pathways 4 Life, a partnership between the Accord Group and Age UK Walsall.

The scheme builds an understanding of what dementia is and how organisations can do their bit in creating a dementia friendly environment. Those on board are also being equipped with the skills to make the lives of people with dementia easier, ensuring that they aren’t misunderstood and are given the help and support they need.

Councillor Angela Underhill, the Mayor of Walsall, awarded certificates to Walsall organisations that had achieved the minimum to be considered as working to become dementia friendly. She said: ‘It’s great that these companies are doing more to be responsive to the requirements of dementia. The support that the Alzheimer’s Society and Pathways 4 Life offer means this living with dementia and their carers can gain a greater feeling of respect and security within their communities.’

Nicole Beeching, Head of Service development at the Accord Group, said: ‘Since we launched the dementia friendly initiative three years ago we have been making great strides in turning the whole of Walsall into a dementia friendly town. We’re now calling on all businesses, no matter how big or small, to join the initiative.’

‘Sometimes just the simplest changes, such as how staff communicate, can vastly improve a person with dementia’s day-to-day life. It’s these simple techniques that we’ll speak to businesses about to ensure that people with dementia in Walsall get the support and help that they need every day, whether they’re doing a weekly shop or collecting their pension.’

The numbers of people who are affected by dementia is growing. More than 3,000 people in Walsall are believed to

have dementia and two thirds of these have a diagnosis.

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