

CONCISE REPORTING FORMAT FOR SUB GROUPS TO OLDER PEOPLE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

- Sub Group:
- Date of OPPB Meeting: 14 September 2006
- Reporting Lead: Ken Dorling, Service Manager, Alzheimer's Society.
- Specific Questions Raised by OPPB for Sub-Group?

Research launched by the Alzheimer's Society reveals that the number of people with dementia in Buckinghamshire will rise to 7,200 people by 2021. The report estimates that there are currently 4,900 people living with dementia in the region.

The Alzheimer's Society has two branches in the county South Bucks Branch and the Aylesbury & Buckingham branch. Five part-time staff are employed, supported by volunteers. There is an additional branch in Milton Keynes.

The Aylesbury and Buckingham branch of the Alzheimer's Society provides local services for carers/people with dementia, including advice and support. One such service is the Alzheimer's Café:

The first Alzheimer's café launched on September 15th 1997 in Holland, which was the brainchild of Dr Bere Miesen a Dutch psychiatrist. Since that time Alzheimer's Cafes have grown in number in many different countries.

Essentially, if you can facilitate a good meeting place then people will share their thoughts and experiences, which inevitably will make them, feel that they are not alone.

Each Alzheimer's Café session follows the same format; an informal chat over light refreshments followed by a guest speaker, shared experiences on the subject being discussed. This is followed by something to eat and drink and a chance to chat with old and new friends. We will then have question time and perhaps some entertainment.

Work on the development of the Alzheimer's Café started in January 2006. Several meetings took place to determine the need for such a service and to see how much support there was from other voluntary and not for profit agencies.

Having established that there is a strong demand for an Alzheimer's Café in the Aylesbury area, several visits to established Alzheimer's Café schemes were undertaken to embrace best practice for such a service.

A project group was established to further progress the project. The group was drawn from Social Services, Bucks County Council, Crossroads, NHS and is headed by staff members and volunteers of the Aylesbury Branch of the Alzheimer's Society.

The first meeting of the Aylesbury Alzheimer's café took place on March 1st 2007 and was very well attended. Since then monthly meetings have taken place on the first Thursday in the month and attendance has been consistent with over 30 people attending each session. The Alzheimer's Café takes place in the community centre in Fairford Leys.

Initial funding for the Alzheimer's café came from the residue of an Education and Training grant and local fundraising. The cost to set the scheme up was £3000 and each session costs around £300 to deliver, comprising staff costs, volunteer expenses, hall hire, refreshments and sundries. This equates to around £10 per person per session (2 hours). However for the scheme to continue, additional money is needed.

There is also an opportunity to establish a similar scheme in the North of the county, if funding can be found. Equipment and resources for the existing Alzheimer's Café scheme can be used to help lower costs.