



## Alzheimer's Support

ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT is an award-winning local charity whose aim is to improve the quality of life of families affected by dementia in Wiltshire. It supports people who are living with dementia in their own homes, helping them to maintain as much independence and control over their lives as possible. Alzheimer's Support's services include day clubs, a customised support at home service and a growing range of activity groups. There are many ways to help Alzheimer's Support's work in Wiltshire. You could take part in A Walk to Remember in May, Denim for Dementia in the autumn, or organise a fundraising activity such as a cream tea, quiz night or table top sale. Or volunteer at a group or day club.

- To find out more, visit [www.alzheimerswiltshire.org.uk](http://www.alzheimerswiltshire.org.uk)

Local charity, Alzheimer's Support runs seven memory cafés for people affected by dementia in Wiltshire. Along with their carers they meet old friends and make new ones as well as enjoying a hot drink and a

slice of cake. And it doesn't stop there, on each occasion external speakers/musicians/singers are invited to chair sessions where participants can enjoy a variety of activities.

Joanna Pazucha, communications coordinator with Alzheimer's Support, explains: "Memory cafés are just one of our offerings. We have a service of some kind within a few miles of everyone in Wiltshire so people can stay in their own homes and be part of their community for as long as possible.

"When someone is initially diagnosed, a dementia advisor will visit them at home, explain the benefits they might be entitled to and advise about the various social groups they can join. These include day clubs, movement for the mind exercise sessions, music for the mind singing groups, art classes, gardening groups and outdoor activities.

"We also offer a home support service, where for a couple of hours a week, a support worker will enable the person living with dementia to do what they want, whether it's to have a chat at home or go out to a café, garden centre or stately home. It also gives carers a bit of time to themselves.

"Alzheimer's Support has expanded from very small humble beginnings and we now operate right across Wiltshire. In fact, we are

celebrating our 30th anniversary next year."

There were over 40 people at the Memory Café when *Wiltshire Life* visited the Sheldon Road Methodist Church and there was a real buzz in the air as the group chatted and laughed over their cups of tea or coffee.

"We look forward to this every fortnight," says Pete's wife, Mary. "You get to know people and they're so friendly. We've made new friends since we joined and we do something different each time we come. We enjoy all the activities. The group starts at 10:30am but we normally come early so we can have a chat before the activity starts at 11am."

On this occasion, a nurse was also available to take people's blood pressure and chat to anyone about their health. Today's group activity is being chaired by folk singer Amanda Boyd, who describes herself as a project consultant. However, this rather dry job title doesn't do justice to her many talents.

**Above, from opposite [l-r]: over 40 people attended the event on the day *Wiltshire Life* visited; people often arrive early to socialise; Pam Ollis led the session; the sessions spark memories for attendees; making new friends and sharing memories**

PHOTOS BY TOM ASKEW-MILLER