



## Becoming **Dementia Friendly Church**

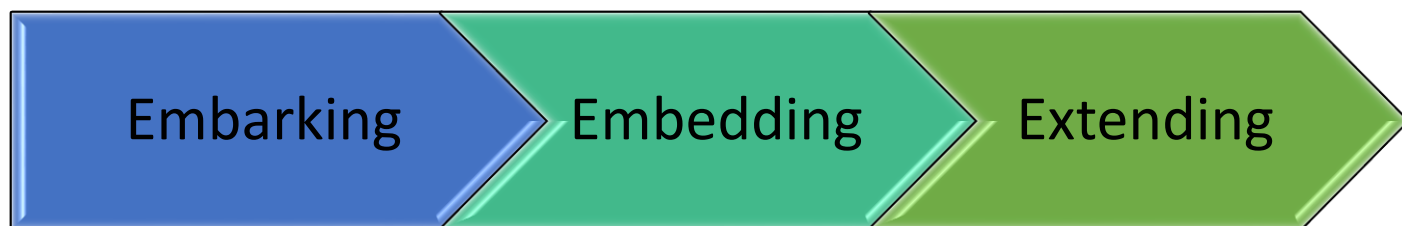
In the Diocese of Lichfield,  
we are supporting churches to  
become more dementia-  
friendly churches at the heart of  
dementia-friendly communities.

We are committed to naming and facing dementia together, both acknowledging the change and the loss that it brings, and also affirming the life and love that can be shared on the path through dementia.

What can our churches offer people affected by dementia? And what can we receive and learn too? How can we stay in step with one another, journeying together as patterns change?

Many churches provide invaluable support to people affected by dementia. This builds on a network of active participants. Working together, we can listen and learn and share ideas, resources and experiences on the process of becoming more dementia-friendly churches at the heart of dementia-friendly communities.

The three double pages of this booklet set out our three-fold approach:





## Embarking on dementia-friendly church

How do churches get started? Embarking on initial engagement as dementia-friendly churches at the heart of dementia-friendly communities, you will have access to material to allow you to lead:

- A Dementia Friendly Church service, naming and facing dementia with the whole congregation: raise awareness, helping people understand more about dementia and to take action on dementia.
- Our four-session "Dementia-friendly churches" course, using videos, on
  - Understanding dementia
  - Focusing on church and dementia – pastoral care, church buildings and church services
  - Community connections; and
  - Next steps
- Sessions, using videos, on
  - Dementia and spirituality; and
  - Exploring dementia using snippets from the dementia-themed play, *The Disappearance of Eliza Grey*.

As you embark on dementia-friendly church, focus on

# LISTENING & UNDERSTANDING

Are you ready to “learn from the expert”, the person with lived experience of dementia? Ask what helps and what’s difficult.

Do you understand enough about dementia to be able to stay in step, to support and keep connections?

I don't want to be pitied.  
I want to be understood.

Ask us about it.  
Dispel the myths.



Embarking

Embedding

Extending

# Embedding dementia-friendly church

How do we embed dementia-friendly church at the heart of the on-going transformative work of our church locally?

- **Dementia-friendly churches certificates** allow churches to identify three steps they will take, in the year ahead, to become more dementia-friendly. When these are agreed, the church can use the “becoming dementia-friendly church” logo, which is on the front page of this booklet.
- A **dementia coordinator** at church is willing to talk to people about memory loss and dementia, share information and pray for people with dementia. We have a format to share and will support coordinators.

None of us have to reinvent the wheel. So we have:

- **Local Network meetings**, to share news, information and ideas locally;
- **Regular Dementia-Friendly Churches Newsletters**, to share stories and ideas, resources and information; and
- Website resources, with access to our key resources:

<https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/inclusion/dementia-friendly-church/dementia-friendly-church.php>

If you'd like to receive the Dementia-Friendly Churches Newsletter or you'd like to know about our next Network meetings, contact Sarah Thorpe on 0798 224 8949 [sarah.thorpe@lichfield.anglican.org](mailto:sarah.thorpe@lichfield.anglican.org)



Focusing on spirituality and dementia, as we understand more about dementia and listen to its impact, how does this help us to understand more of what it is to be human – and of where God is, as we face the unchosen challenges of dementia?



As you embed dementia-friendly church, focus on

# LAMENTING & CELEBRATING

Is there space to acknowledge the cost and challenge of dementia – naming all that's being let go of?

And is there also space to affirm the life each step of the way, noticing the light shining through, even when patterns change?

Diagnosis is like  
a bereavement.

It's not an end.  
There's a life to live.



Embarking

Embedding

Extending



## Extending to become a dementia-friendly church at the heart of a dementia-friendly community

How can we connect with others who are involved with dementia? As well as sharing ideas and resources with other denominations and dioceses, we are glad to make connections across our local communities.

- **Local partnerships and shared action** can increase our impact, as we work together and encourage one another - particularly the local Dementia Action Alliance and dementia-friendly communities and charities, such as the Alzheimer's Society, Dementia UK and Age UK.
- **Our blog shares stories** – it's such powerful way of empowering others to take next steps <https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/news?tagid=46>
- **Other resources** are available on the website and we're glad to signpost people on to them, locally or nationally.

As you extend to become a dementia-friendly church at the heart of a dementia-friendly community, focus on

# PARTNERING & EMPOWERING

Within our local communities, who else is engaging with dementia and taking action on it? How can we work together?

And how can we give a voice to people affected by dementia? Also, how do we empower volunteers, encouraging them too?

We can do so much more together.

There's so much still to give - giving in a different way.



Embarking

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Please do get in touch – it'll be good to work together.

## DIOCESE OF LICHFIELD

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 Blog: <https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/news?tagid=46> Instagram: @lichdementiachurch

