



## Dementia Friendly Environment Checklist

This checklist has been created to enable public buildings such as Community Centres, Churches and Business premises to give guided thought to creating dementia friendly spaces.

Some small changes, such as clear signs can be achieved at minimal cost, others will involve some investment and can only be considered when budgets allow or when replacing existing fixtures and furnishings.

### Exterior Access

- Is your building accessible to wheelchair standards? Consider provision of ramp.
- Are the edges of any steps distinguishable in a contrasting colour? Edges can be simply painted in white or yellow.

### Notice Boards

- Are notices displayed in a clear and uncluttered way? Consider font, Verdena or Ariel are best, size, text colour, contrasting background colour and height of board.

## Signage

- Are your signs clear, in bold face with good contrast between text and background? Black on yellow is suggested colour.
- Is there a contrast between the sign and surface it is mounted on? This will allow the person to recognize it as a sign.
- Are signs fixed to the doors they refer to? Avoid adjacent surfaces if at all possible.
- Are signs placed approximately 135cms off the floor? People with dementia tend to have a downward gaze.
- Are signs for toilets and exits clear?
- Are glass doors clearly marked?

## Lighting

- Are entrances well lit and do they make as much use of natural light as possible?
- Are you able to avoid pools of bright light or deep shadow?

## Flooring

- Are there any highly reflective or slippery surfaces? Reflections can cause confusion.
- Can you achieve plain coloured carpeting with minimal changes to colours or textures? Patterns can cause confusion to people with perceptual problems.
  
- Are changes in floor finish flush rather than stepped? Changes in floor surfaces can cause confusion to people with perceptual problems. If there is a step at the same time you also introduce a trip hazard.

- Are you aware of and able to minimise slip and trip hazards?

### Furnishings

- Is your seating of appropriate height for people to rise from?
- Is your seating of a contrasting colour to the flooring? This allows people with perceptual and spatial awareness difficulties (common in dementia) to identify seating more easily.
- Are you able to avoid the use of chrome and glass furnishings and fixtures?

### Staff

- Are your staff/volunteers "Dementia Friendly". Free training is available to enable this.

### Changing rooms and toilets

- Do you have a unisex toilet/changing room which would allow someone to have assistance without causing them or other users' embarrassment?
- Toilet seats which are of a contrasting colour to walls and toilet are easier to see if someone has visual or perceptual problems.
- Contrasting coloured door surrounds can make it easier for people to identify where the toilet is.

### Environment

- Do you have a quiet area for someone who might feel anxious or confused?
- Can you avoid the use of mirrors (except in essential areas)? Reflection

can often lead to increased confusion.

Can you provide large local topical photographs? These can often provide a helpful diversionary discussion point if people become agitated and uncomfortable. Picture albums and magazines can also help.

Can music and other potential distractions be kept to a minimum if needed?

This list is not exhaustive and is designed only as guidance towards best practice whilst acknowledging financial constraints and the diversity of people who may wish to use your premises.

If possible, speak to people living with dementia and ask them their opinion of your facilities, they are, after all the experts.

## Appendix

Further advice / information available

### Exterior Access

- Go to [citizensadvice.org.uk](http://citizensadvice.org.uk)
- Equality Act 2010 and search for 'duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people'.

### Signage

- Go to [alzheimers.org.uk](http://alzheimers.org.uk) and search for 'dementia friendly signage'. Signs can be downloaded and printed off.

### Staff

- Go to [dementiafriends.org.uk](http://dementiafriends.org.uk)