

Dementia Friendly Strategy 2016 – 2021





Dementia Friendly Strategy 2016 – 2021

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Chairman's Foreword

This is an exciting project with enormous potential to extend accessibility to Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) not only to the target group – those living with dementia and their families, but also the greater community. Any improvements will have a positive outcome for all involved. Making the CCAONB a fantastic place to visit will, increase the prosperity of the local community and place CCAONB on the map as an innovative, forward thinking, local partnership and pave the way for future developments, whilst always protecting the local environment, beautiful landscape, history and wildlife. It will provide a life-long legacy for the people of Staffordshire and beyond.

The Dementia Friendly Strategy (DFS) has been developed to complement the Cannock Chase Management Plan 2014–2019 to ensure the correct balance to conserve areas and yet enhance the positive experience for people to increase their wellbeing.

Working on this strategy has already increased the awareness and understanding of people living with dementia and their families.

It has strengthened partnership working and increased understanding of the differing needs of those organisations involved and opened up stronger communications and cooperation to work together on joint initiatives.

This strategy complements existing and ongoing work in Cannock and Hednesford in particular around increasing dementia friendly communities, working in conjunction with the aims of the Dementia Action Alliance.

I am proud to have been part of this development and anticipate that the Action Plan will make this area a better place to live well and enjoy life. I look forward to seeing positive change and continuous development over the coming years.

Cllr Bob McCardle

Chairman of the Cannock Chase AONB Joint Committee

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Introduction

Cannock Chase is an amazing area of natural countryside covering about 68 sq. km. and comprising a mixture of natural deciduous woodland, coniferous plantations and open heathland. It provides a remarkable range of landscape and wildlife, including a herd of some 800 fallow deer and a number of rare and endangered birds. The area is criss-crossed by many waymarked paths, including the Heart of England Way and the Staffordshire Way.

In addition to its landscape, wildlife and biodiversity, the Chase also offers a number of historical attractions, ranging from an Iron Age fort to the remains of World War 1 training camps and from interesting geological features to Shugborough stately home and estate on its northern edge. There are a number of war memorials, including German and Commonwealth war cemeteries which have international appeal.

The Chase is enjoyed by many thousands of people throughout the year with a range of diverse activities including walking, mountain biking, pony trekking, bird-watching and photography. Equally it provides a natural playground for families or those simply wanting a quiet stroll in the countryside.

Cannock Chase was designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1958, the purpose of which is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area, including wildlife and cultural heritage. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000(CROW) requires a management Plan to be prepared, published and maintained and this is the responsibility of a legally established partnership (Cannock Chase AONB) This is comprised of the five relevant local authorities (Staffordshire County Council, Cannock Chase Council, Lichfield District Council, South Staffordshire Council and Stafford Borough Council and other local and government organisations).

The Staffordshire towns of Stafford, Rugeley, Cannock and Lichfield all lie around the AONB which means it is on the doorstep of a large number of Staffordshire residents. Additionally, it is within easy reach of Walsall and Wolverhampton and the northern sectors of the West Midlands conurbation but also attracts visitors from other conurbations for example Manchester and South Cheshire.

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Whilst huge numbers of people can and do enjoy the Chase, many others are unable to do so because of the effects of age or disability. Cannock Chase AONB recognises that these amazing natural assets have the potential to greatly enhance the quality of the lives of those people living with dementia and indeed their carers, if ways could be found to improve access and make the area and the whole AONB community more friendly to such people.

There are several well researched and in depth strategies relating to CCAONB. The purpose of this Dementia Friendly Strategy(DFS) is to be 'friendly' – in order to achieve, it needs to be clear, simple and regularly reviewed otherwise it will just remain as an unused document and it will be difficult for members of the partnership and the community to recognise their important contributions and the progress made.

Most visitors to the Chase are local people who visit regularly to enjoy the beauty of the landscape and take healthy exercise. They need to be able to relate to the strategy.



Cannock Chase AONB



Shugborough Hall

Tixall

Great Haywood

Little Haywood

Staffs & Worcs Canal

STAFFORD

Milford

Seven Springs

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust
Wolseley Centre

Long distance paths

Brocton

Brocton Coppice

Etching Hill

A 34

Glacial Boulder

RUGELEY

Trent & Mersey Canal

Birches Valley
Forest Centre

A 460

To Lichfield →

Military
Cemeteries

Cannock Chase
Visitors Centre

Lichfield
Cathedral

Pye
Green

Museum of
Cannock Chase

Castle Ring

Hednesford

Hazelslade

Cannock
Wood

Gentleshaw

Shoal Hill Local
Nature Reserve

Hednesford Hills Local
Nature Reserve

Gentleshaw
Common

CANNOCK

A 34

A 460

Long distance paths



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Aim of the Strategy

The aim of the strategy set out in this document is to raise awareness amongst all those involved in the management and operation of Cannock Chase and its various facilities (including local businesses) of the needs of people living with dementia and their carers. It seeks to promote a wide understanding of the potential for the area to greatly enhance people's lives and to enable them to live well with dementia. In doing so, it will also improve the accessibility and experience of others who through age or infirmity are currently unable to enjoy the Chase.

Most importantly, the Dementia Friendly Strategy will set out a five year Action Plan, developed through consultation and participation, for Cannock Chase AONB to become one of the first protected landscape areas to develop into a Dementia Friendly Community (in line with the Dementia Action Alliance Initiative) to undertake practical actions to improve access and enhance the experience for visitors to this area.

The strategy is aimed at those living with dementia with low to moderate needs and their family/friends who care for them.

Outcomes

1. Increase awareness and understanding of dementia and how to support people to remain part of our community and reduce stigma.
2. Create a dementia friendly community Action Plan through increased community engagement.
3. Raise awareness of AONB and the importance of this designation.
4. Improve the welcome and experience for visitors to the area especially those living with dementia and their families.
5. Increase the opportunity to involve the local community throughout the process and beyond.
6. Improvement of health on older people in general.



Success

Success will be measured by the number of people living with dementia visiting Cannock Chase and enjoying its various facilities and attractions. It will be measured by feedback from users and by the number of community initiatives established to improve the welcome and experience for people living with dementia and their Carers.

The delivery of the outputs outlined and monitored in the Action Plan will highlight the success of the strategy.

The success of the DFS is everyone's responsibility and it will only happen if there is continuous involvement and commitment over the next 5 years. It is dependent upon strong partnership work with clear responsibilities to achieve the vision and upon regular evaluation to monitor and progress. The most successful strategies are uncomplicated and realistic, where progress is easily recognised and celebrated, then built upon. Crucially, there will be in addition to this the need for investment and to decide who should pay for what at a time when all organisations are under financial pressures.

Dementia – The Facts

Dementia is an illness caused when parts of someone's brain stops working properly. We do not fully understand the causes yet.

There is currently no cure for dementia, which gets more common with age. Once a person has dementia they will get worse over time until the end of their life. However, people who have dementia can often have a good quality of life for a number of years.

People with dementia have problems with:

- Thinking clearly or following a series of steps
- Remembering things
- Communicating – Such as finding the right words or repeating themselves
- Reasoning – or continuously asking the same question
- Doing day-to day things like cooking or using a bank card

People with dementia may also have problems like:

- Being depressed
- Mood swings and aggression
- Wandering or getting lost

Above taken from Department of Health

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There are several different types of dementia

- Alzheimers disease is the most common form 62%
- Vascular dementia 17%
- Others 21%

The number of people in the UK living with dementia is currently around 800,000. According to Alzheimer's Society, the number of people with dementia is increasing because people are living longer. It is estimated that by 2021, the number of people with dementia in the UK will have increased to around 1 million.

Whilst this condition is mainly associated with old age we must note that in 2013 there were 42,325 people diagnosed with early onset dementia (onset before the age of 65 years) in the UK. It is estimated that after the age of 60 the prevalence of dementia doubles for every 5 years, approx. 1 in 20 aged 65 has some form of dementia rising to 1 in 4 by the age of 85.

It is widely believed that historically, many cases of dementia have gone undiagnosed and that more than 50 or 60% of cases were never recorded. This situation has changed over the past few years and there is now a greater recognition and diagnosis. The following table shows the difference between the numbers diagnosed and the likely true numbers based on 2011/12 figures together with projections for future years in the areas of Staffordshire surrounding Cannock Chase.



Summary of current, expected and projected prevalence for dementia

	Recorded prevalence (QOF 2011/12)	Expected prevalence (2011/12)	Estimated under recording (percentage)	Projected prevalence based on expected prevalence			
				2015	2020	2025	2030
Cannock Chase	675 (0.5%)	1510 (1.1%)	55%	1646 (1.2%)	1699 (1.3%)	1743 (1.3%)	2055 (1.5%)
East Staffordshire	709 (0.5%)	1608 (1.2%)	56%	1768 (1.3%)	1826 (1.3%)	1885 (1.3%)	2236 (1.5%)
Seisdon Peninsula	307 (0.6%)	778 (1.5%)	61%	854 (1.6%)	892 (1.7%)	927 (1.8%)	1130 (2.1%)
South East Staffordshire	717 (0.5%)	1789 (1.1%)	60%	1983 (1.2%)	2064 (1.3%)	2144 (1.3%)	2643 (1.5%)
Stafford and Surrounds	723 (0.5%)	1988 (1.4%)	64%	2157 (1.5%)	2219 (1.5%)	2282 (1.5%)	2705 (1.8%)
Staffordshire CCGs	1,131 (0.5%)	7673 (1.3%)	59%	8407 (1.4%)	8700 (1.4%)	8981 (1.4%)	10769 (1.7%)

Source: NHS Doncaster QOF Benchmarking Tool. Quality and Outcomes Framework(QOF) for April 2011 to March 2012, Quality Management and Analysis System(QMAS) database – 2011/12 data as at end of July 2012, Copyright 2012, The Health and Social Care Information Centre, Prescribing and Primary Care Services. All rights reserved, GP registered populations and 2011-based interim population projections, Office for National Statistics, Crown copyright

It is clear therefore, that there are very large numbers of people with dementia living within the AONB's "catchment area", particularly considering that in addition to the numbers above, large areas of the West Midlands conurbation fall also within easy reach of the Chase.

Additionally, many older people, whether they live with dementia or not have other age related health issues leading to poor mobility and frailty and often just a lack of confidence which prevents them venturing outdoors. Whilst this strategy aims to make the AONB dementia friendly, the benefits will accrue just as much to all older people.

It is suggested that these numbers wholly justify a strategy to ensure that this very significant section of the community is not excluded from enjoying the AONB and that the natural assets are used to help enable all these people to live well.

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Carers

Whilst the focus of this strategy is to increase and enhance the visitors experience for those living with dementia a number of people benefitting from this strategy will increase several times over if their carers/family and friends needs are also taken into account

Most people remain living at home for as long as possible, looked after by family and friends.

The local population is ageing and the number of people living into their 80's is increasing.

A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support.

Anyone can become a carer; carers come from all walks of life, all cultures and can be of any age. Many feel they are doing what anyone else would in the same situation; looking after their mother, son, or best friend and just getting on with it.

Source – The Carers Trust web site 2016

An NHS Information Survey in 2010 produced the following conclusions:

- One in five people aged 50 – 64 are Carers.
- The number of Carers over the age of 65 is increasing more rapidly than the general Carers population. (Carers UK Oct 2015)
- Many Carers report that caring results in a negative and often lasting impact on their own physical health and mental well- being particularly sighting stress/ anxiety and depression.
- Most Carers (40%) look after their parents or parents in law
- Over a quarter (26%) care for their spouse or partner
- Carers often report feeling socially isolated and many give up work or reduce their hours to care
- 58% of Carers are female – 42% male
- 10% of Carers look after someone with a dementia type illness and 58% of Carers look after someone with a physical disability however these are not mutually exclusive and due to the effects of old age many of the cared for suffer from more than one illness/disability.



It is recognised that carers make a huge contribution to health and social care services and save the tax payer many millions of pounds each year. As the conclusions above show, there is often a big cost to the carers own health but any recognition and support provided for these carers can extend the period of time they are able to manage their caring role and their own health and wellbeing needs. Developing this Dementia Friendly Strategy has the potential to improve matters for the Carers as well as those living with dementia. This double impact is beneficial to the entire community and will help relieve pressures on health and social community care services in the future.

The benefits of having a Dementia Friendly Strategy

Getting closer to nature can have a positive effect, the fresh air, natural light and sunshine are all recognised to be good for you even by non-scientists. People with dementia are just like everyone else, some like the great outdoors and open spaces, others don't, and we are all individuals. The purpose of the strategy is to identify ways of making visiting the AONB a more positive and accessible experience for those who want to be there.

We have already mentioned that most people affected by dementia are elderly and this group spends a reducing the amount of time outdoors. Their difficulties with mobility, the physical and financial challenges of running a car, the reduction in confidence, all contribute to reducing their opportunity and appetite for venturing into the great outdoors.

The Strategy should increase the opportunity for more people to

- Undertake exercise and enjoy the peace and tranquillity that the AONB has to offer and to take advantage of stimulating the senses in the great outdoors.
- Enjoy the opportunity to socialise with others and reduce the isolation that can sometimes be experienced by visiting the centres and making new friends
- Evoke happy memories and sustain positive family relationships by undertaking activities together on the Chase
- Create new memories through activities such as photography to share in the future
- Renew past hobbies such as an appreciation for wildlife flora and fauna

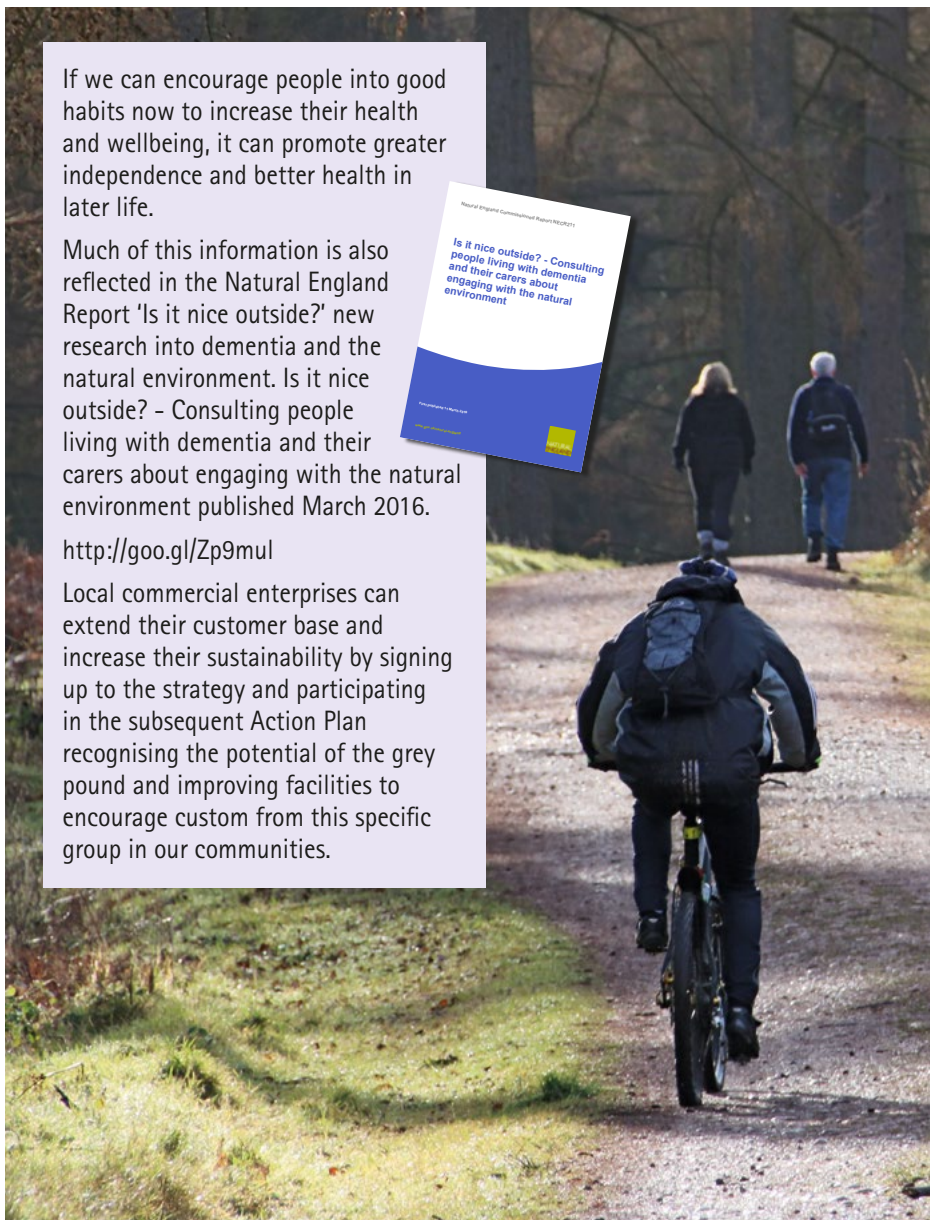
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If we can encourage people into good habits now to increase their health and wellbeing, it can promote greater independence and better health in later life.

Much of this information is also reflected in the Natural England Report 'Is it nice outside?' new research into dementia and the natural environment. *Is it nice outside? - Consulting people living with dementia and their carers about engaging with the natural environment* published March 2016.

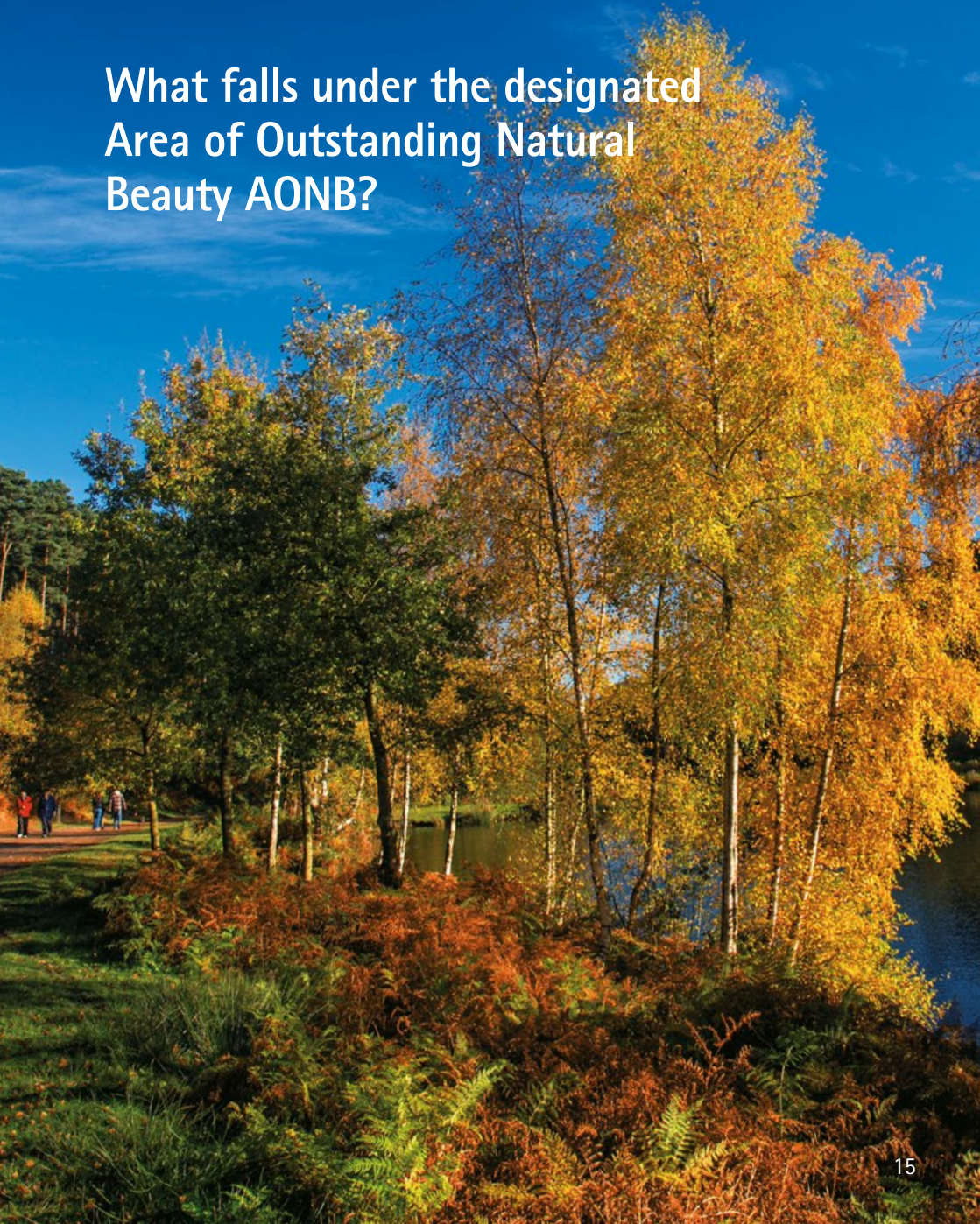
<http://goo.gl/Zp9mul>

Local commercial enterprises can extend their customer base and increase their sustainability by signing up to the strategy and participating in the subsequent Action Plan recognising the potential of the grey pound and improving facilities to encourage custom from this specific group in our communities.



The AONB Assets

What falls under the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty AONB?



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The AONB Assets

What falls under the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty AONB?

FIVE FORMAL VISITOR CENTRES

- Cannock Chase Visitor Centre (Marquis Drive)
- Shugborough Hall and Estate
- Staffordshire Wildlife Trust Wolseley Centre
- Museum of Cannock Chase
- Birches Valley Forestry Centre

The area covers 68 square kilometres but most people do not understand the significance of the designation of the Area of Outstanding Beauty however the logo is recognised by members of the public.

A separate strategy for each of the visitor centres could be undertaken, but it is suggested that an all-encompassing strategy and integrated approaches will significantly improve the chances of success in achieving the aims. It is hoped that the individual centres will take responsibility for any action that concerns their facilities to make the visitor experience more welcoming, safe, accessible and enjoyable by signing up to the strategy implementation.

CANNOCK CHASE VISITOR CENTRE

This centre has good parking, toilets with disabled provision, coffee shop and gift shop and an adventure playground and picnic area providing something for the whole family to enjoy. It is possible to hire motorised scooters from here also. The reconstructed Great War Hut provides an insight into the past with informative volunteers in full regalia. With amenities for all ages in one place a trip out for the extended family can occur facilitating a pleasurable experience for those living with dementia and their loved ones.

The centre provides a lot of leaflets and information but the lay out can be confusing and overcrowded for people with dementia however the cakes in the café are excellent.





SHUGBOROUGH ESTATE

This site has many advantages for those less physically able. It is car free and provides shuttle transport for both wheelchair and non-wheel chair users around the estate. Registered Carers can 'go free' when accompanying disabled visitors. Powered scooters and wheel chairs are available for hire on site and there are several fully accessible toilets. There are lots of benches, shelters and adapted picnic tables for family enjoyment. There are several tea room/refreshment places that are easily reached without steps and thick handled cutlery is available on request. Most areas have level access.

National Trust is due to take over the estate and plans will be developed to attract more visitors in the future and enhance the facilities in and around the 900 acres of magnificent parkland. Currently the working Victorian servants' quarters, Georgian farm and mill provide the backdrop for history to be brought to life by characters in costume demonstrating activities and talking about their lives in the past. The House itself due to its construction and age is not always suitable for adaptation and is naturally less accessible for those with mobility issues. However there is plenty to see and do on this site as well as areas for peaceful relaxation.



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STAFFORDSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST WOLSELEY CENTRE

The Wolseley Centre is set in 26 acres and beautiful grounds with 2 wildlife friendly gardens encompassing pools, streams and a river with plenty of seating to sit and watch the tranquil scenery and abundant wildlife. The foot paths are flat and there is a board walk to bring visitors close to water loving wildlife and a play trail. There is a small area for refreshments both indoor and outdoor and toilets with disability access.

There is useful information advising visitors what to look out for as the seasons change in the centre and the opportunity to purchase snacks and drinks as well as the gift shop.

The Sensory garden is packed with plants that stimulate the senses – smell, taste, touch, sight and sound, very relevant for people with dementia to help them feel connected to nature.

The wildlife garden is full of ideas to transfer to your home garden home to encourage wildlife.

This centre is currently free to visit and provides a range of courses such as creative woodcarving providing opportunities for people to rekindle past skills, which is important for people with dementia.





MUSEUM OF CANNOCK CHASE

The museum site was once home to the Valley Colliery; a training pit for 1000's of young miners and is easily recognised by the large pit wheel at its entrance.

Its focus is on local history and is host to a variety of changing exhibitions throughout the year.

Opportunities at this venue range from the miners cottage gallery, 1940's room and an interactive toys and games gallery. An excellent venue to evoke memories and stimulate conversation.

The Mining Memories offers a fascinating interactive journey back in time to the Cannock Chase coal field, visitors can experience first-hand the sensations entering the pit cage as it shudders and shakes its way down to the mine!

The museum holds fascinating stories about Cannock Chase's industrial beginnings, famous local citizens, its military role and local life.

This building sometimes holds specific events with a dementia focus with opportunities designed to engage this particular group in a meaningful activity.

Entry to the museum is currently free



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BIRCHES VALLEY FORESTRY CENTRE

The opportunities available on this site are a little more adventurous with the Go Ape high ropes course and one of the best mountain biking destinations in the West Midlands, however it is also a suitable starting place for a wide variety of walks taking in the mixture of woodlands and open heathland. The all-terrain electric Segways provide a contemporary method of travel encompassing a guided forest safari.

The café provides welcome respite at any time of year and there are benches to sit and watch younger family members enjoy the adventure play area close by.

Swinerton Cycle Centre offers visitors of all ages and abilities the opportunity to hire bikes to make use of the many cycle routes.

All the centres have an abundance of useful information and different opening times so publicity and marketing is extremely important to assist visitors to make the correct choices for their wants and needs. There are different options for disabled and free parking which can cause some confusion and dissuade people from visiting.

A calendar of events is available for all sites and a varied programme is offered throughout the entire AONB location ranging from Bat walks, craft activities, country fairs and history exhibitions.

Equally there are many opportunities for people to enjoy the area without attending a specific event allowing for flexibility and choice to suit all needs.





THE HEATHLANDS AND WOODLANDS

There have been a few studies looking at the effects nature can have on peoples' health and wellbeing, simply taking a walk in the woodlands and heathlands can provide an abundant source of multisensory stimulation, which can be lacking in normal everyday life where people living with dementia can spend long periods of time sitting in their own home with little of interest to participate in. Feeling in touch with nature no matter what the weather can be invigorating –

- The exposure to natural sunlight
- The sensation of a warm breeze or chilling wind
- The fragrance of woodland and pine trees
- The sounds of the birdlife and noise of the wind in the trees
- The sensation of shuffling through heaps of crisp leaves and the water in babbling brooks
- The taste of a welcoming hot chocolate after a winter walk or a delicious ice-cream on a hot summer's day

We can all appreciate the effects of the natural environment on our emotions, mood and behaviour.

The Heathlands and woodlands can provide peace and tranquillity for those living with dementia and a restful place for their family and friends to enjoy its riches.

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The preservation and restoration of the heathland by re-introducing grazing is a sustainable form of conservation management.

This helps create a varied habitat for wildlife. The opportunity for people to see different breeds of cattle and ponies' increases and so extends the menu of things to enjoy when visiting this area.

Visitors also enjoy seeing the horses and riders and dogs and walkers. For people with dementia stroking an animal can be a positive experience and provoke happy memories.

Certain walks are aimed at inexperienced walkers, simple to follow and not too challenging. Information leaflets such as the Tolkien Walks Guide (Author of the Hobbit and Lord of the Rings) can be found at most visitor centres. This can encourage people living well with dementia to enjoy more exercise and sustain their health and wellbeing.

The forest and woodlands make up approximately 40% of the AONB with some parts dating back as far as 15th Century - native oak woodland, providing areas to get back to nature and relax from the stresses of daily life.

The seasons provide an ever-changing backdrop and there are options to take a variety of guided walks for those fit and able. The areas for those who are less sure-footed can still be observed from the car parks and many sites have benches near to the carpark to allow for sitting and taking in the ambience or enjoying a bite at a picnic table.

HISTORY AND CULTURE

The AONB has a wealth of history to pursue for those who hold this interest.

Castle Ring is the largest Iron Age Hill fort in Staffordshire, a Scheduled Ancient Monument. This location has a long and varied history playing an important role in military life. It provides points of great interest that can be explored by car and on foot heralding spectacular views being 242 metres above sea level.

In the First World War, two camps were built in Rugeley and Brocton thanks to the generosity of the Earl of Lichfield offering his land to assist the war effort and training of soldiers. Cannock Chase became the base for the New Zealand Rifle Brigade.





There was a German prison of war camp on site and of course the two Military cemeteries that remain today, respectably cared for, providing a tranquil area for contemplation.

The German Military cemetery opened in 1967 and contains the graves of 5000 German nationals who lost their lives in the UK during the two world wars.

Dedicated volunteers support keeping these memories alive 'lest we forget'. There are no commercial facilities at the cemeteries.



The heritage trail provides many opportunities for the enthusiast to discover local history; the trail covers mixed surfaces of tarmac, gravel and concrete and can be difficult for manual wheel chairs and buggies in some parts. It takes in a number of buildings and places of interest in Cannock, Hednesford and Rugeley.

The AONB that is Cannock Chase holds a wealth of opportunities for people living with dementia and their families to

- remain in touch with nature
- enjoy healthy exercise in the great outdoors
- explore places of historical interest
- feel part of their local community
- relax in beautiful surroundings

The challenge is to develop the Action Plan to increase these opportunities opening them up to more people whilst safe guarding the environment and protecting the key habitats and species which help to make this such a special and valued place.



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Preparation of this strategy

The Strategy has been produced on the basis of participation and dialogue. Last February we produced a draft paper setting out our assessment of progress to date in taking forward AONB Cannock Chase Dementia Friendly Strategy and these included some proposals for the Action Plan.

Following that we coordinated a public event to comment on the contents of the draft paper and input into the Action Plan (see Appendix 1: list of invitees/participants). The event was attended by 75 people from a very broad cross section of people both interested in dementia and the AONB. In order to set the scene a dementia friends presentation was delivered to learn more about what it is like to live with dementia and turn that understanding into action. The audience then broke into mixed groups to discuss:

- the barriers to accessing Cannock Chase
- the assets
- solutions to breaking down the barriers

The afternoon session went on to break these categories down into further detail with participants contributing enthusiastically to identify areas for the Action Plan.

In addition to the event we were lucky enough to gain a number of comments via the thoughts of local people attending Living Well with Dementia sessions delivered by The Carers Association Southern Staffordshire (CASS). These local groups meet regularly and both family carers and those living with dementia attend. Their contribution to the strategy was welcomed as their needs and wants were vital to assist local partners in developing a strategy that would benefit this specific group of people and be fit for purpose. They are the experts as they live with the challenge on a daily basis.

All comments and suggestions were then fed into this document which outlines the Vision of what is to be achieved and the Action Plan to work towards for the next 5 years.

The responsibility of moving the strategy forward and monitoring its implementation lies with AONB Partnership and meetings to review progress and re-evaluate the Action Plan will be put in place.

Participants invited to the conference

- CCAONB members – individuals and corporate members
- Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Natural England and The Environment Agency
- Local businesses



- Schools to encourage intergenerational work
- Shugborough Parklands
- Volunteers from the AONB information hut and visitor centres
- Local care homes and care providers
- Day opportunity providers for people living with dementia
- Local councillors
- Local transport providers
- Our colleagues in the Dementia Alliance and Dementia Network
- Interested members of the general public

Attendee Comment

'Thank you today was very interesting and educating. I met lots of new people and organisations that we/I can work together with!'

Many were invited but some were unable to attend, however their contributions were included and most welcome.

Feedback from participants who attended the Living Well with Dementia sessions delivered by The Carers Association Southern Staffordshire.

Much of this reflects the findings of the Visitor Management Strategy

Issues that prevented/deterred people Living Well with Dementia and the carers included:

- Not enough signage, visitors are unsure as to where to go and what to see
- Not enough accessible toilets
- Places to sit and rest and take in the views insufficient particularly for those that can still walk but not far, just some suitable logs, place to rest on would help
- More places to eat and drink requested with clearer signage as to where these are
- Wheelchair access is limited and when used can result in having to pack dirty wheel chairs into clean cars
- Lack of public transport
- Car parking not always user friendly for elderly drivers as spaces are not clearly defined, this can be problematic for those less physically able to get in and out of cars easily who require more room. Charges for parking not welcome especially for disabled drivers at some locations



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- How to get help and who to ask if visitors become unwell or don't feel safe
- Fear of crime or antisocial behaviour
- More publicity about events needed
- Later opening hours in the café during the summer months
- The Visitor centre provides a lot of leaflets and information but the lay out can be confusing and overcrowded for people with dementia
- Unclear where SOS points are and how to get help if you don't have a mobile phone or one that works

However,

Whilst our survey was on a much smaller scale it mirrored many of the findings of 2011 AONB visitor survey.

The views gathered were individual to people living with dementia and their carers:

'I don't like the guided walks as I like to walk fast and my partner walks slowly'

'I enjoy the guided walks as I don't feel comfortable walking alone'

'It's a great area to visit and take friends and family'

'It's a beautiful area with lots to see'

'I didn't realise there were so many opportunities both indoors and outdoors we will definitely plan to make more family visits to the AONB in the future'

There was an even split by respondents between animal wildlife and the landscape as to what people were most interested in followed by the visitors centres and then exhibitions. The majority of people preferred to drive around the AONB rather than walk.

The Vision

To improve the experiences of people living with dementia, their friends and family when visiting Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding natural Beauty.

Areas for consideration in developing the Action Plan

Building Based opportunities

- Museum of Cannock Chase
- Shugborough Hall
- Cannock Chase visitor centre
- Staffordshire wildlife trust Wolseley Centre
- Birches Valley Forestry Centre
- Chasewater Innovation Centre this centre does not lend itself to making the AONB a DFC and should pursue this in its own right with support from the partnership



Landscape

- The heathland and woodland
- Milford Common

Commercial/Local Business

- Cafes
- Shops
- Pubs/Restaurants
- Businesses

Recreational Opportunities

- Volunteering
- Cycling
- Horse Riding
- Guided Walks
- Activities - Photography/birdwatching

Key Outcomes

Purely the process of writing the strategy has produced some positive outcomes

- 75 people received a dementia friends session and now have a greater awareness of dementia, in basic terms how to recognise it and how it effects people
- Greater awareness will help reduce the stigma associated with this type of mental health issue and help people to seek help sooner
- There is a greater understanding of matters that can improve facilities to make them more dementia friendly in other settings
- Improvements made to AONB also have a positive impact on other members of the community who will also benefit from – better signage, this helps the visually impaired and those with a learning disability if clear and uncomplicated/pictorial
- Working together on the strategy has increased community cohesion and paved the way for future partnership work on other projects
- More people should be able to enjoy the facilities at AONB and improve their own health and well being
- The opportunities for volunteering will be highlighted and increase the capacity for AONB to sustain and improve its assets and for volunteers to gain new skills, knowledge and reduce social isolation
- Developing this strategy increased exposure to people living with dementia and their families of the opportunities they were previously unaware of in Cannock Chase AONB to improve their health and wellbeing and enjoyment of this beautiful area
- More Carers are aware that they can visit Shugborough for free – information has been shared with local groups and future trips planned
- There is greater understanding as to the designation of what an area of outstanding natural beauty actually means, recognising the significance of the landscape quality, scientific interest and historical features it offers and the need to protect it



Dementia Friendly Strategy 2016 – 2021

Concerns

- What funding has been identified to assist the development of the strategy for the coming years?
- Developments that could make the area more dementia friendly may have a negative impact on the environment, who will prioritise conflicting values?
- Increasing the number of visitors does not correspond to increasing the money spent in the local economy, what can be done to alter this?
- Making areas more accessible can detract from the beauty and tranquillity of the landscape as more people visit and traffic increases
- Signage that is helpful for people with dementia is not always complimentary to the environment or as aesthetically pleasing, so will change occur?

Any actions need to be mindful of maintaining an acceptable balance to ensure the necessary conservation is possible whilst safely developing the accessibility of the area to those living with dementia and their families so that all sections of our society can benefit and enjoy its assets.

The Management Plan 2014 – 2019 and the CCAONB visitor management strategy contain several actions which overlap with the issues identified in this Dementia Friendly Strategy (DFS)

A discussion therefore needs to take place to identify areas of commonality and to ensure that any actions complete the outcomes required for all strategies.

Below are the key action points derived from the consultations undertaken.



Conclusion

The undertaking of developing this Dementia Friendly Strategy for the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and subsequent Action Plan was only possible due to the involvement of the community. The input of those working, volunteering, trading and particularly those living with dementia and their carers was highly valued and integral to the whole design for which we are extremely grateful.

The process undertaken was successful in achieving certain outcomes even during the development of the strategy. At the conference 45 evaluation forms we completed:

- All attendees received Dementia friends training
- 31/45 people are now more knowledgeable regarding the designation AONB
- 36/45 people felt as a result of attending the conference that they could make their own organisation dementia friendly in some way
- 45/45 people felt better networked to organisations that support people to live well with dementia and their carers.

It is envisaged that the enthusiasm and momentum following the conference will continue during the execution of the Action Plan

An Action Plan has been produced to make positive changes to enable those living with dementia and their families and friends to enjoy the facilities and opportunities for recreation in this fantastic area.

People feel more likely to take advantage of the health and wellbeing aspects of visiting Cannock Chase and all it has to offer through information gained during the undertaking of this strategy and this should continue to increase as the years progress.

This Dementia Friendly Strategy will assist the development of the Management Plan for 2014 – 19 and should be cross referenced against the Visitors Management Strategy Action Plan to avoid duplication and assist recognition of progress.

There are continuous engagement opportunities for people to comment on matters that may effect this strategy and new information coming forward, this needs to be taken into account when reviewing the strategy for example Management of Staffordshire's Countryside Estate commencing 2016.

The activities identified in the Action Plan will ensure that the AONB continues to work towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Community.

Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be recognised as a trail blazer in promoting Dementia Friendly environments and should be extremely proud of its forward thinking and care shown to those living with dementia in our community and the care shown to the conservation and protection of this wonderful location.

Dementia Friendly Strategy 2016 – 2021

Action Plan

1. Issue: Lack of awareness and knowledge of dementia

a. Action: Provide dementia friends training to raise awareness and understanding

	Who is responsible	To be completed in					Review Date
		Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	
Offer regular dementia friends and further training sessions to staff and volunteers working at all sites including local commercial outlets encouraging them to become dementia champions							
Using the dementia champions expand offer of training to taxi drivers, bus drivers, community groups mini bus drivers							
Using the dementia champions offer training to local schools/colleges and youth groups							
b. Action: Develop a co-ordinated approach across all sites							
Celebrate National Dementia Awareness Week sharing ideas and promotional opportunities							



2. Issue: Lack of awareness and knowledge of AONB

a. Action: Promote AONB as working towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Community (DFC)

	Who is responsible	To be completed in					Review Date
		Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	
Link up websites with appropriate partners and AONB members and Tourist information							
Greater use of social media and local radio with regular updates							
Review existing literature to incorporate updated branding of AONB working towards becoming a DFC							
Produce regular press releases quarterly							



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3. Issue: Travelling to the AONB for those without their own transport is difficult

a. Action: Increase public transport to AONB

	Who is responsible	To be completed in					Review Date
		Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	
Influence local transport networks to provide suitable routes to the AONB	Local Council						

b. Action: Provide alternative ways of accessing the AONB

Organise specific tours for groups on an ad hoc basis and utilise volunteer transport. Work in partnership with others e.g. use mini buses from organisations that have them sitting still for parts of the day	Local Support Groups						
Organise specific tours for groups on an ad hoc basis and utilise volunteer transport. Work in partnership with others e.g. use mini buses from organisations that have them sitting still for parts of the day	Local Support Groups						



4. Issue: Visitors to the AONB are unsure how to get there, then where to go

a. Action: Improve Signage for drivers coming to the AONB

	Who is responsible	To be completed in					Review Date
		Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	
Review of signage required as currently it does not meet the need of those living with dementia and their families. Currently it doesn't give enough advance notice of direction of assets and car parking (bearing in mind it needs to be in keeping with the environment)							
Design a picturesque route for people to use to enjoy the areas from their car whilst driving through the AONB							

b. Action: Improve Access and the experience for walkers and those of limited mobility

Develop dementia friendly trails by using safe pathways and clear signage with dementia friendly branding and accompanying leaflets							
Design and promote regular dementia friendly guided walks							

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	Who is responsible	To be completed in					Review Date
		Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	
Ensure some routes are suitable for wheelchair and mobility scooters and plan to increase the number of these available							
Develop a multi - sensory walk							
Review opportunities to sit and enjoy the experience and always consider when developing new sites							





5. Issue: Lack of suitable activities for those living with dementia

a. Action: Increase bespoke opportunities

	Who is responsible	To be completed in					Review Date
		Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	
Design a varied programme of events for the year including arts/crafts, music, food and physical activities							
Promote family activities schedule widely through partner networks							
Review and evaluate opportunities accessed by those living well with dementia and their families to feed in to the planning for the following year							

b. Action: Develop Memory Points

Encourage exhibitors to design dementia friendly creations including use of all the senses at particular designated memory points and promote these locations							
Create a sensory pack to accompany walks to evoke memories e.g. lavender, heather etc							

Dementia Friendly Strategy 2016 – 2021

6. Issue: Perception of safety

a. Action: To reduce anxieties whilst visiting open spaces

	Who is responsible	To be completed in					Review Date
		Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	
Review recent health and safety incidents Promote good practice to give confidence to visitors							
Undertake a contingency test for someone lost on the chase who is vulnerable							
Develop information on what to do in an emergency and promote this particularly clearly in the car parks							
Encourage those who have undertaken the Dementia friends session to wear their badge of recognition to make them more approachable to families and those living with dementia							

7. Issue: Inadequate facilities deter visitors

a. Action: Promote and increase assets

	Who is responsible	To be completed in					Review Date
		Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	
Update signage to promote toilet facilities and include details on promotional leaflets to inform potential visitors							
Review the number of opportunities to sit, rest and take in the ambience, utilising seating that is in keeping with the environment							



8. Issue : Lack of Funding to complete identified actions

a. Action : List current opportunities for funding for example Big Lottery, Trust Funds, Heritage Lottery, Councils, corporate social responsibility, localised fund raising etc.

	Who is responsible	To be completed in					Review Date
		Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	
Allocate a named person to undertake a review of funding list and develop a fund raising strategy for this project							
Prioritise actions at appropriate meetings							
Review effectiveness of site donation boxes							
Consider joint applications for shared goals with other organisations on a regular basis (or pooling budgets)							

9. Issue: This plan is not added to and actions not followed up

a. Action: Ensure responsibility for the actions are allocated to named personnel in order to maintain the momentum of the DFS for AONB

Area for concern	Who is responsible	To be completed in					Review Date
		Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	
Regular meetings and tracking of the progress of the Action Plan							Every Year
Review and update priorities annually							

Dementia Friendly Strategy 2016 – 2021

Expectations

What will success look like?

Over the duration of the strategy it is hoped that these outcomes can be demonstrated.

- Reduction in stigma and increased knowledge and understanding of people living with dementia
- Greater involvement in community life and better understanding of the designation of AONB
- Improved health and wellbeing of people living with dementia due to increased visits
- Greater partnership working
- Increase in volunteers contributing to the sustainability of the area
- Increased revenue to local businesses

Suggestions to ensure success

- Keep things simple
- Publicise and share the DFS both with participants and the wider community and instigate sign up to the strategy and Action Plan
- Encourage the AONB partnership to join the Dementia Action Alliance
- Work towards the AONB becoming a recognised dementia friendly community
- Yearly delivery of Dementia Awareness Sessions
- Annual consultation of those Living well with dementia to understand any changes in visitors perception and experience of the AONB
- Web site monitoring for feedback and comments
- Marketing/promotion during National Dementia Awareness week
- Utilise community volunteers of all ages over a number of different aspects of development
- Consider donation boxes on car parks to assist strategy deliver costs
- 6 monthly review of actions



- 12 monthly evaluation of progress and re-evaluate future proposals involving all stakeholders – local businesses, partnership members, volunteers, staff,
- Feed information into other strategies such as the Management Plan 2014 – 2019 and Visitor Management strategy and vice versa to assist mutual targets/aspirations
- Update success on website and in the local press
- Celebrate success widely and include local stories of local interest to maintain momentum





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