



ACTION PLAN 2024-26



Caring for people, our places and the planet



Introduction

In 2022, Barnet gained recognition from the Alzheimer's Society as a borough working to become Dementia Friendly. This Action Plan Refresh (2024-26) is designed to build on this achievement and make Barnet more Dementia Friendly for all. It also aims to tackle stigma and increase understanding of dementia in Barnet.



Working
together
to be a Dementia
Friendly
community



NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT



This Action Plan is developed in light of recent strategic developments. They include:

Chief Medical Officer’s Annual Report 2023

This report¹ recommends two complementary approaches to improve the quality of life for older adults. These are reducing disease and creating environments that enable people to maintain their independence longer. Dementia Friendly Barnet hopes to achieve these aims by not only promoting risk reduction messages and healthier lifestyle choices but also by encouraging and supporting venues to become more Dementia Friendly.

Dementia Strategy 2023-28

Barnet has launched its first Dementia Strategy to create a system-wide response to maximise the health, wellbeing, and independence of people living with dementia and their families. Barnet Borough Partnership has launched the Ageing Well workstream to oversee the implementation of the Dementia Strategy actions across health, social care, voluntary and community sectors.

Age-Friendly Barnet

Age UK Barnet has been asked to lead on the work to make Barnet an age-friendly borough. Working in partnership with the council and other stakeholders, Age-Friendly Barnet projects will address the structural and social barriers to ageing well in Barnet. To maximise the mutual benefits in working with older adults and people living with dementia (PLWD), this Action Plan aligns with the Age-Friendly Barnet Call for Action.

End of the Alzheimer’s Society’s Dementia Friendly Communities recognition scheme

This scheme came to an end in December 2023, and as a result, we are looking to create a new Dementia Friendly Award scheme in collaboration with dementia-friendly leads from all five North Central London (NCL) boroughs. As such, this action plan may be developed further in line with developments to this scheme.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-2023-health-in-an-ageing-society>

Dementia Friendly Barnet

Barnet's Dementia Friendly partnership currently has 57 member organisations. The partnership has a joint leadership where the CEOs of Barnet Carers Centre and Age UK Barnet are driving the work forward alongside Public Health.

Engagement with key stakeholders, including local organisations, the NHS, people affected by dementia, and their carers and family members, is at the heart of this action plan to ensure that we support people to live well with dementia in Barnet. One of the ways we do this is through our Dementia Friendly Barnet steering group, which includes a person living with dementia and a carer. By working together with the Dementia Friendly Partnership, the group ensures a continuous strategy is in place to increase Dementia Friendly Action in the borough. The Group is also responsible for ensuring that the goals set out in this Action Plan are achieved.

The purpose of this action plan is to assist neighbourhoods and communities to be as welcoming and supportive of PLWD as possible. Clinical issues and actions associated with primary care are outside the scope of this action plan. Instead, this plan focuses on prevention through promoting key messaging and creating Dementia Friendly environments.

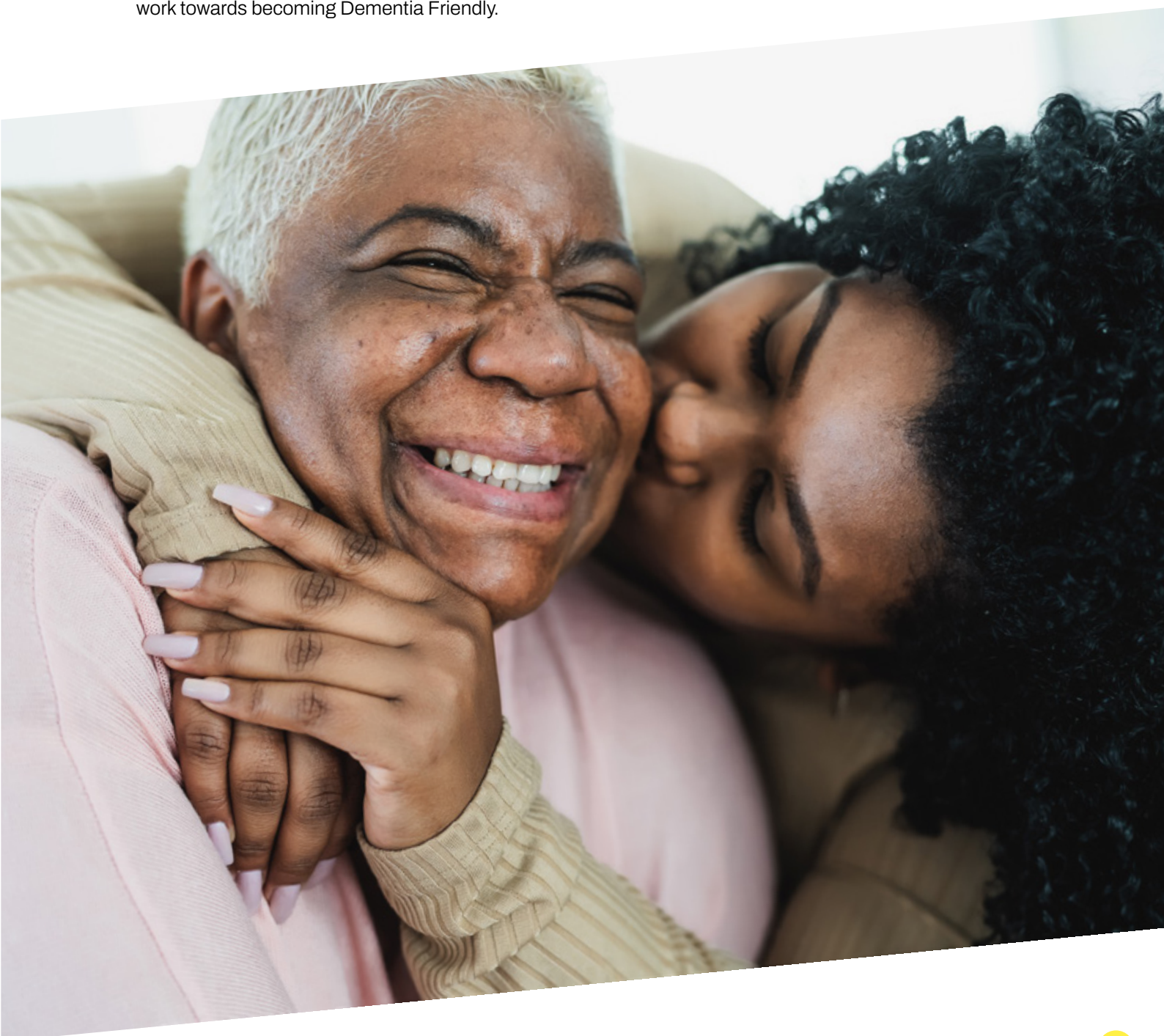


WHERE WE ARE NOW

The previous Action Plan identified three key areas for action. They are:

- 1.** Recruit at least five local venues to the Mayor of London's Dementia Friendly Venues Charter to demonstrate the approach for local venues.
- 2.** To develop a framework for Dementia Friendly faith settings and have at least 5 early adopters designated as dementia friendly to demonstrate the approach for the local community.
- 3.** Recruit at least five local high-street businesses to work towards becoming Dementia Friendly.

The next section will outline what we have achieved against these key areas of action, all related to increasing the number of Dementia Friendly Venues, as well as our other ongoing objectives of improving awareness and understanding of dementia across the borough.



DEMENTIA FRIENDLY VENUES

Recruit venues to the Mayor's Dementia Friendly Venues Charter

The Mayor of London's official Dementia Friendly Venues Charter is designed for arts, culture and leisure venues. Faith venues and community organisations which offer services for older residents can also be accredited through the scheme. We currently have 26 venues accredited through the Charter encompassing a wide range of venues, including theatres, sports centres, care homes and faith venues (see Appendix 1 for the list of the accredited venues). Barnet has by far the highest number of venues accredited in London. The next highest borough is Kensington and Chelsea, with six venues.

Develop a framework for Dementia Friendly Faith Settings

We have worked with key local stakeholders such as Faith Action (a national faith charity), local faith leaders, residents with lived experience and the Barnet Multi-Faith Forum to develop the Dementia Friendly Faith Communities self-assessment framework. The framework includes a series of actions that are specific to faith communities and respect the diversity of religious and spiritual practices. Two faith venues have officially been accredited as Dementia Friendly. However, we have several other Dementia Friendly Venues which have faith links.



Recruit local businesses to become Dementia Friendly

The effort to make businesses in Barnet more dementia friendly has thus far taken place as part of the Healthier High Streets programme. This programme targeted five areas in which Barnet's high streets could be healthier: Community Toilets, Breastfeeding Welcome, Healthy Catering Commitment, Refill London, and Dementia Friendly Businesses. As a result of this scheme, four businesses signed up to become Dementia Friendly.

Unfortunately, Dementia Friendly Businesses were the most onerous and least popular of the five schemes on the programme. Some businesses expressed concern and frustration that they were being asked to become Dementia Friendly when they felt they faced more pressing concerns such as theft and vandalism. Therefore, going forward, we will take a more targeted approach to Dementia Friendly Businesses, focusing on areas in which we know there is a high proportion of older people. This way, we ensure our work directly benefits the largest number of people and that the businesses can clearly see the benefits of signing onto the scheme. Greater collaboration with the Town Centres teams and utilisation of their network will also likely be beneficial, as will collaboration with the Age-Friendly Champions – a group of accredited Age UK volunteers – as these groups have a good sense of the key areas to target.

Looking ahead

Going forward, we are hoping to create a new North Central London (NCL) Dementia Friendly award at the Integrated Care System level. Alzheimer's Society announced that they can no longer continue with the Dementia Friendly Communities accreditation. Therefore, we are working across the five NCL boroughs to develop our own award scheme to sit alongside the Mayor's accreditation that goes beyond arts and cultural venues. Doing so will allow us to include a wider range of venues under the scheme, such as GP surgeries, businesses, and any other venues PLWD may interact with thus enabling us to spread the Dementia Friendly mission further.



IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING OF DEMENTIA ACROSS THE BOROUGH

Training efforts

The previous action plan was also committed to challenging stigma and increasing awareness of dementia as well as what it means to live with dementia.

One way we have done this in Barnet is by promoting Alzheimer's Society's Dementia Friends scheme. A Dementia Friend is someone who watches a short video online to learn about dementia so they can better understand and support their community. We encourage residents, businesses, and local organisations to become Dementia Friends. As of the end of December 2023, there are 15,837 Dementia Friends in the borough.

Furthermore, Barnet has commissioned and promoted a longer, more advanced Understanding Dementia training provided by Dementia Club UK. The training provides individuals with a CPD qualification and accredits businesses and other organisations as working toward being dementia friendly. As of the end of February 2024, 1,598 people have undergone the training. This has included Councillors, a growing number of whom are now Dementia Friends.

In addition to this training for the general public, we have also taken a targeted approach for certain key groups. For example, we have conducted training sessions for firefighters and successfully trained

one-quarter of the fire staff in Barnet. Training was conducted in partnership with Age-Friendly Barnet to ensure that not just PLWD, but all older people are supported. The training was very positively received, and plans are underway to train the remaining staff next year.

Going forward, potential areas to target include GP surgeries, pharmacies, the bus network, and the police. GP surgeries and pharmacies will now be supported to become dementia friendly through the new award scheme.

Under the Admiral Nurse's education remit, bespoke Dementia training for GP surgeries and Primary Care staff has been commissioned and support for improving the environment has been provided. The Admiral Nurse Primary Care education remit covers all the boroughs. So far, dementia awareness and environment adaptation topics have been delivered to 49 reception teams and 110 GPs in Barnet and Islington. It has also been delivered to 65 Practice Nurse Teams across all NCL boroughs. We are looking to build on this work and incorporate it into the new accreditation scheme.

As for the bus network and police, it has proved more difficult to reach out and build connections, but work is ongoing to do so as they have been identified as key groups from engagement with older people and PLWD.



Comms Campaigns

Dementia can significantly alter one's life, but it should not end people's ability to participate meaningfully and enrichingly in society. We not only want to empower individuals to live well with dementia but also increase awareness of the measures that are already in place to support PLWD.

In addition to this, we want to reduce the prevalence of dementia by promoting risk-reduction messages. Several modifiable risk factors have been found to prevent or delay up to 40% of dementia. By providing information and promoting behaviour change we can reduce the risk and impact of dementia.

Efforts to do so thus far include:

- A new Living Well with Dementia leaflet has been produced and over 4,000 copies distributed to libraries, faith organisations, councillors, and other key partners.
- Several risk reduction campaigns have been launched in collaboration with Age UK Barnet to address the potentially modifiable risk factors for developing dementia.
- Regular promotion in magazines, social media, and newsletters as well as at in-person networking events.
- Barnet Carers' Centre and Age UK Barnet have hosted/participated in several events with the support of Barnet council which have provided support and information about the ageing process and living well with dementia.
- Several new video case studies have also been created and launched to mark the launch of the new Dementia Strategy as well as highlight the work being done to make Barnet more Dementia Friendly. These case studies highlight the importance of early diagnosis, the support available, preventive measures, and the stories of individuals.

Currently, work is also underway on creating a new Dementia Friendly brand for Barnet. This would replace the old Alzheimer's Society branding and be used by the council and key partners to signify they are working towards Dementia Friendly. Doing so will allow us to present a unified message and allow us to maximise our efforts through collaboration.



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We are continually engaging with people affected by dementia to find out what services matter to them most, as well as reaching out to local service providers to espouse the benefits of becoming dementia friendly. These conversations have informed the development of this action plan, and details of additional engagement we did in the process of writing this action plan can be found in Appendix 2.

This Action Plan Refresh has identified four key areas of action to be targeted over the coming years:

1. Increase the number of Dementia Friendly Venues in the borough using the Mayor of London's Dementia Friendly Venues Charter.

WHAT WE PROPOSE TO DO	TIMELINES	LEADS
Promote benefits of becoming a dementia friendly venue across Barnet.	Ongoing	Public Health, Age UK Barnet, Barnet Carers
Re-start the Dementia Friendly Accreditation support group.	Start May 2024	Public Health
Achieve at least 30 venues accredited.	March 2025	Public Health
Continue to engage with residents and service providers to target the areas of greatest need.	Ongoing	Dementia Friendly Steering Group
Continue to provide leadership amongst the faith communities.	Ongoing	St Barnabas, Public Health
Take a leadership role in developing NCL Dementia Friendly award scheme.	By June 2024	Public Health
Implement the new NCL Dementia Friendly award scheme.	September 2024	Public Health

2. Increase the number of Dementia Friendly Businesses.

WHAT WE PROPOSE TO DO	TIMELINES	LEADS
Identify and agree geographical locations to promote dementia friendly businesses.	By April 2024	Dementia Friendly Steering Group
Promote benefits of becoming a dementia friendly business across the targeted locations.	By June 2025	Dementia Friendly Steering Group
Ensure there is a clear and simple framework for businesses to sign onto the scheme that clearly outlines the steps and the benefits.	May 2024	Public Health
Sign five new businesses onto the scheme, including one flag-ship business that can serve as an example for others.	June 2026	Dementia Friendly Steering Group
Train Age Friendly Champions to engage and work with businesses to become Dementia Friendly.	May 2024	Public Health & AUB.



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3. Improve understanding of dementia amongst key service providers and residents.

WHAT WE PROPOSE TO DO	TIMELINES	LEADS
Increase the number of residents to become Dementia Friends.	Ongoing	Dementia Friendly Steering Group
Increase the number of people who understand about dementia through training.	Ongoing	Public Health
Offer training to key services such as Fire Service, community pharmacies, police, and the local bus network.	September 2026	Public Health, Age UK Barnet, Admiral Nurse
Increase number of GP surgeries who have received Dementia Friendly training through the Admiral Nurse education remit.	March 2025	Admiral Nurse

4. Raise awareness of Dementia and the profile of Dementia Friendly Barnet.

WHAT WE PROPOSE TO DO	TIMELINES	LEADS
Complete and disseminate the 'easy read' Living Well with Dementia leaflet.	March/April 2024	Public Health
Create and promote risk reduction messages in key community languages.	Throughout the year	Age UK Barnet
Launch the new Dementia Friendly Barnet brand.	Official launch: May 2024 as part of Dementia Action Week.	Public Health
Continue to organise and participate in events for PLWD and their carers.	Ongoing	Age UK Barnet and Barnet Carers
Publish a list of all the activities that support PLWD in the borough.	Ongoing	Age UK Barnet and Barnet Carers



APPENDIX 1 - List of Dementia Friendly venues:

1	Age UK Barnet – Station Road
2	Age UK Barnet – Ann Owens Centre
3	Ansell Court – Your Choice Barnet
4	Arts Depot
5	Barnet Copthall Leisure Centre
6	Barnet Memory Service
7	Brunswick Park Medical Practice
8	Burnt Oak Leisure Centre
9	Candlewood House Care Home
10	Carlton Court
11	Chickenshed Theatre
12	Chipping Barnet Library
13	Colindale Community Trust
14	Dell Field Court Care Home
15	Finchley Church End Library
16	Finchley Reform Synagogue
17	Goodwin Court
18	Meadowside Care Home
19	Michael Sobell Day Centre (Jewish Care)
20	New Barnet Leisure Centre
21	OneStonegrove Community Centre
22	Phoenix Cinema
23	RAF Museum
24	Sam Beckman Day Centre (Jewish Care)
25	Signature at Hendon Hall
26	St Barnabas Church



APPENDIX 2 -

ENGAGEMENT OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR CARERS:

As part of our work, we regularly reach out to and engage with people living with dementia and their carers. As part of writing this action plan, we have carried out additional engagement to listen and ensure that the plan accurately reflects the views and needs of people living with dementia in the borough. Having conducted extensive consultation for our Dementia Friendly Venues and Dementia Friendly Faith projects previously, this time we focused on Dementia Friendly Businesses to try and figure out ways to improve the scheme. We also aimed to find out wider points about how people living with dementia and their carers find living in Barnet.

As part of this process, we visited a Dementia Club UK online carers meeting, an Age UK Barnet Hendon site Day Opportunities session, an Age UK Barnet Ann Owens site Dementia Café session, and a Dementia Club UK Dementia Café session. We have also attended the Age-friendly Barnet Call for Action Launch & Art Exhibition at ArtsDepot, and the research and work they've done on this project has also informed our Action Plan. These sessions as well as the outreach we have done in the past and will do in the future inform and shape the work we do.

From our engagement, we received overwhelming support for our mission of making Barnet a borough where people living with dementia could live an independent life and contribute to their communities for as long as possible. Interestingly, we also heard about many positive experiences people living with dementia have with businesses on their high street and other people they interact with. However, we also identified several key areas to target to ensure our communities are as dementia friendly as possible going forward.

Perhaps the most common emergent theme was that “people” are crucial. Kind, compassionate, and patient customer service makes all the difference. Some felt that it could be good if there were some way of subtly letting staff members know about their condition, but many felt good customer service should be delivered regardless. Whatever the case, well-trained staff that can provide support and spot someone having trouble are key.

Another key theme was the importance of creating a peaceful environment. Many people reported that they found noisiness and busyness overwhelming and that they needed time and space to process information. Calming music can also have a positive effect. If a Dementia Friendly Business, such as a café, could have a quiet area or quiet hours of the day which specifically cater for people living with dementia that could have a positive impact.

Another important issue was the accessibility of the buildings. It must be possible for people living with dementia to easily access a venue for it to be dementia friendly. Clear directions to the venue can be beneficial. It is also worth thinking about how accessible the building via public transport is and whether parking is available (note that for many people living with dementia using public transport can be difficult). Many carers reported issues with the accessibility of new online parking measures. As for the venue itself, stairs or slopes leading to the venue can hinder accessibility. Within the venue itself, clear signage (e.g. to toilets) is important to ensure a person living with dementia can navigate the venue confidently.

Other suggestions include ensuring menus are easy to read and providing a seat for those who need it.

These key findings have not only informed this action plan and the work we've been doing but will also be incorporated into the forthcoming NCL Dementia Friendly award scheme.