

Dementia friendly Nantwich – a guide for local businesses

Did you know 43.8% of residents in Nantwich are over fifty?¹

Nationally, this group accounts for 76% of the nation's financial wealth and the population is ageing. 1 in 3 people over the age of 80 live with dementia and 225,000 people are diagnosed each year. Becoming age friendly and dementia friendly create opportunities for local businesses.

What are the key challenges faced by people with dementia?

Problems with mobility and navigating around stores or premises:

- having difficulty recognising places
- unclear signage
- patterns or shiny surfaces being disorientating
- overwhelming background noise
- fear of getting lost inside a space
- problems finding items and not knowing where to go or who to go to for additional support.

Challenges caused by memory problems:

- forgetting their address or where they are
- sequencing a task in the wrong order
- confusing information
- being unable to find the right words to describe the items they need.

Problems when paying:

- having difficulty remembering PINs
- having trouble counting or recognising money
- coping with new technology and payment methods
- feeling rushed
- worrying that they will forget to pay
- people not understanding their difficulties
- not following social cues
- staff not being confident to help

Produced by Direct Access and the Creating Dementia Friendly Nantwich group.

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Direct Access



The top barriers people with dementia said they faced in a survey were:

69% lack of confidence

68% worried about being confused

60% worried about getting lost

Benefits of becoming dementia friendly

- 1.** Gain a competitive advantage – 83% of people with memory problems have switched their shopping habits to places that are more accessible.
- 2.** Enhanced brand reputation – becoming dementia friendly will help businesses demonstrate that they are socially responsible and that they value their customers.
- 3.** Complying with the law – under the Equality Act 2010, organisations have a legal obligation to ensure consumers are adequately protected and that access to services is as inclusive as possible.

¹ https://www.citypopulation.de/en/uk/northwestengland/cheshire_east/E34000994_nantwich/

Helping people to live well with dementia – being part of the community and being able to continue with everyday tasks are important factors that help people. Becoming a dementia-friendly business means enabling people to carry on doing the things they want to do. Here are some ideas to consider:

Signage and navigation

- ✓ Clear signage to and from store facilities and payment points.
- ✓ Clear signage at eye level and above for different aisles.
- ✓ Use clear graphics and images to help if someone forgets what an object is called or is having difficulties with communication.
- ✓ Map at store entrance to help people see where to go
- ✓ Avoid regular changing of layout which reduces familiarity of site

Lighting

- ✓ Ensure entrances are well-lit and lighting is consistent throughout. Natural light where possible.
- ✓ Minimise shadows, glares and pools of light to reduce difficulties in perception.

Flooring and shiny surfaces

- ✓ Changes in floor surfaces can cause confusion for people with perceptual problems.
- ✓ Patterns on the floor can be misperceived as things to avoid. Mats or rugs that are a different colour can increase confusion. People may avoid stepping on it because it looks like a hole.
- ✓ Steps may also be trip hazards
- ✓ Clear signage at eye level and above for different aisles.

Noise

- ✓ Background noise can be distracting and disorientating, particularly music or radio.
- ✓ Excessive background noise can impact on an individual's ability to concentrate, become disorientating or interfere with hearing aids.

Toilets

- ✓ They can be particularly disorientating as several doors can cause confusion over how to get out.
- ✓ Clear signage and way out signs can provide reassuring signposting for people with dementia.
- ✓ Toilet seats that are a contrasting colour to the walls and rest of the toilet are easier to see if someone has visual problems, or problems judging depth perception.

General

- ✓ Talk to the person – not their companion.
- ✓ Consider displaying information about dementia support at the till or reception.
- ✓ Display coin recognition charts that show the different denominations and shapes of coins.
- ✓ Allow people time and offer to help if having difficulty identifying coins and handling money.
- ✓ It might be helpful to find out if there is anything that triggers behaviours like taking things from a store without paying – it may simply be they have forgotten they had picked it up.
- ✓ Allow family members or companions to bring items back with or without the receipt and create a tab so a note can be made so items can be paid at another time.
- ✓ If the individual is a regular customer, ensure all employees are aware of them and in a position to support where needed.

By being as understanding as possible and creating a dementia-friendly environment, local businesses in Nantwich are supporting people with dementia to stay active in their community and continue to participate in the activities they enjoy.

