

Brain Waves April 2018

ISSN 1757-2444



Innovations
in Dementia

April 2018

Newsletter number 105

Brain Waves

A monthly newsletter from Innovations in Dementia CIC

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Where has Brain Waves been?

Well, after 10 or so years of monthly Brain Waves, we think its safe to say you may have noticed a bit of a gap.

The last edition was published in November 2016, and since then there has been a lot going on to say the least.

Philly Hare and Damian Murphy have joined our ranks which has been great.

Nada - one of our founding directors left at the end of 2016 - and though we remain great friends we have missed her greatly.

In the last year or so we have been taking stock of our first 10 years, thinking about what we have learned, and where we are going.

You will see that the website has been revamped, and what you will see there is very much a reflection of this process of taking stock.

You will see we have more clearly articulated what we believe and why, and how this informs the work we do.

We have also laid out a 'timeline' of all the work we have done in our first 10 years. Working on this was an amazing experience - a reminder of how far we have come, what we have achieved, and how much we owe to the many people with dementia who have been generous enough to share with us their skills, insight, experience and wisdom.

You will also see that we have pulled together all of our resources and publications, all of which are free to view or download.



Philly



Damian



Nada

We have also put a lot of thought into the nature of the work we have been doing, and came to realise that it falls into five interlocking and intersecting areas:

Rights

Since 2008 we have been encouraging conversation with others about thinking differently about dementia. We wanted people with dementia to believe they had a right to be heard, and to expect the same opportunities to live well as others.

Accessibility

Since 2007 we have been thinking about and working on projects that aim to make the world in which we live more accessible for people with dementia.

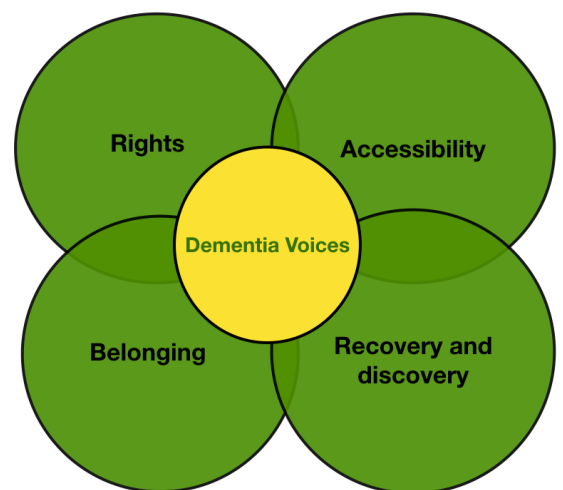
Dementia Voices

From early on we were determined to support people with dementia to have a say in decisions that affect their lives, as we believed that we all had a right for our voices to be heard.

Belonging

People with dementia have been telling us for years that the most important thing in their lives are the relationships they have, and the sense of belonging.....belonging in a family, a couple, a group of friends, a football club, or in a whole community.

Since 2007 we have been working on projects that focus on the sense of belonging, and the right to belong. Much has been focused on belonging to communities, through our work on rights, accessibility and dementia friendly communities. More recently Damian's work has enabled us to focus more closely on what happens within couples and support people through our work on Getting Along.



Recovery and Discovery

By 'recovery' we don't mean that people can recover from dementia – but that people can recover voice, control, identity and a place in their relationships and communities which sometimes get lost.

We believe that people with dementia should have the opportunity to discover new skills, new relationships and a new perspective on life.

Thank you for your patience - you can read below a short summary of what we have been doing in the last year - and how this newsletter and Innovations in Dementia news in general is going to work from now on.

So - what have we been doing in the last year?

I won't bore you with more details of our strategic planning and navel-gazing, useful as it has been for us - that's not all we have been doing.

Our work on Rights

- The Dementia Policy Think Tank produced a shadow report and submitted it to the United Nations to inform their exploration of the UK response to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We supported Keith Oliver to present the report in person in Geneva. We then followed this up by meeting with civil servants from the Office of Disability Issues.

Our work on Accessibility

- The 'Getting Out and About' programme moved into the action phase as 3 DEEP groups across Yorkshire campaigned for greater clarity on bus timetables; more accessible and supported rail journeys; and for access to Blue Badge scheme for people living with dementia. Now we can't claim that this led directly to the current review of extending Blue Badge to people with dementia, but lets just say it certainly helped!

- We continued a range of consumer testing projects in collaboration with RICA (Research Institute for Consumer affairs). Topics included the use and accessibility of Taxis in Camden; a visit to the Royal Shakespeare Company; and user testing of the Mecca Bingo in York.
- We worked with Edinburgh University (ECRED) and HammondCare Dementia co-producing checklists for DEEP groups to use when auditing inside or outside public spaces.

Our work on Dementia Voices

- We received funding from Life Changes Trust to run a series of “Gatherings” for people with dementia in Scotland. These took place in Edinburgh, Hawick and Inverness. People with dementia connected with each other, made project plans, set priorities, sung together and shared love, enlightenment, vibrancy and hope.
- We set up a research involvement group for Exeter University’s REACH team – a collaboration of researchers working on dementia research
- We were delighted to receive funding from Comic Relief and Big Lottery Fund to continue Dementia Diaries for another 3 years. We re-launched Dementia Diaries with a fantastic residential Gathering of diarists in Birmingham. We now have a regular column in Journal of Dementia Care, and a growing number of enthusiastic Diarists.

Our work on Belonging

- We delivered full Getting Along facilitator training to 8 staff from Alzheimer’s Support Wiltshire. A service-wide relationship-centred approach was adopted and a formal programme initiated.
- Philly visited Japan to undertake a study tour of group homes in the North (Sendai area).

Our work on Recovery and Discovery

- We facilitated the steering group for the new Reading Friends initiative in collaboration with the Reading Agency. This is a nationwide befriending project to empower, engage and connect older people through social reading activities.

What will happen with the news from now on?

We will publish news as and when it happens on the website, and through social media.

At the end of every month the news will be gathered together and appear in digest form in the monthly newsletter.

We think that this will help get the news out more quickly, but also provide a handy once-a-month digest as a way of catching up.



Innovations
in Dementia

Innovations in Dementia is a community interest company run by four directors - Rachael Litherland; Steve Milton; Philly Hare and Damian Murphy.

To find out more about our work, visit our website.

www.innovationsindementia.org.uk

We are registered as a community interest company No 06046815