



# Dementia-friendly retail guide

A practical guide for shops and retailers  
to support people affected by dementia



## Document purpose

This is a practical guide for retail organisations of all sizes to become more dementia friendly. It has guidance on increasing employee understanding and improving store environments and facilities. It highlights the changes that stores can make to become more accessible to people affected by dementia<sup>1</sup>. It demonstrates that small changes can go a long way in supporting people affected by dementia.

## Title

Dementia-friendly retail guide: A practical guide for shops and retailers to support people affected by dementia

## Publication date

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## Target audience

Individuals or organisations who want to improve the dementia-friendliness of their store or shopping space. Store managers and employees of large or small retail organisations can make simple changes to achieve this, for example improving customer service and reviewing store layouts.

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## Publisher

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<sup>1</sup>This report uses the term 'people affected by dementia' to include people with dementia and those important to them, which may include friends or family members (including family carers).



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# Contents

<b>Foreword from Alzheimer’s Society</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Foreword from Iceland</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
The scale of the challenge	5
Why does retail matter?	6
What people with dementia have told us	7
<b>What is dementia?</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Challenges for people with dementia</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>The benefits of becoming dementia friendly</b>	<b>14</b>
The business benefits of becoming dementia friendly	15
The social benefits of becoming dementia friendly	16
What does becoming a dementia-friendly retailer involve?	17
<b>People: Supporting customers and employees affected by dementia</b>	<b>20</b>
Training and awareness	21
Shoplifting and dementia	24
Dementia Friends for organisations	26
Supporting employees	31
<b>Process: Customer and client support</b>	<b>32</b>
Audit of processes, procedures and support mechanisms	35
<b>Place: Physical environment</b>	<b>36</b>
Physical environment checklist	38
<b>Place: Community and employee engagement</b>	<b>46</b>
Dementia-friendly communities	47
Volunteering	50
Fundraising	50
<b>Useful resources and organisations</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>56</b>

# Foreword from Alzheimer's Society

Dementia is one of the greatest challenges we face in society today. It isn't a challenge that is going away and we all have a part to play. Dementia can affect every aspect of an individual's life, often preventing them from doing the things that many of us take for granted. Shopping and getting out in our communities can provide people with a purpose and reduce the risk of social isolation. However, many retailers are not currently equipped to meet this need for people affected by dementia.

Becoming a dementia-friendly retailer means providing the opportunities to support every person with dementia through greater awareness and understanding. This will make a huge difference to those affected by dementia and their quality of life. We need to ensure that retailers train their employees to be aware of the impact of dementia, and consider environments and processes to tackle the challenges customers and employees face.

Consumers want businesses and organisations that value their customers. This will only be achieved with greater awareness, understanding and support for customers and employees affected by dementia.

This guide highlights the many ways a retailer can transform itself to better support people affected by dementia, so they can live and participate in their local community.

The Prime Minister's challenge on dementia states that by 2020 the UK will be the first dementia-friendly nation. Becoming a dementia-friendly organisation means providing the opportunities to support every person with dementia to continue to do the things they enjoy and retain their independence. This will make a huge difference to people affected by dementia and their quality of life. With numbers of people with dementia in the UK set to increase to over a million by 2021 and over two million by 2050, there has never been a better time to take action and improve the lives of people with dementia.

Businesses are now realising it makes good business sense to be dementia friendly. Defeating dementia won't just happen in a lab or in a care setting, we need a whole societal response. We need a step change in the way people think, talk and act about the condition and all of society has a role to play.



**Jeremy Hughes**  
CEO, Alzheimer's Society



# Foreword from Sir Malcolm Walker

Like many people, I didn't pay too much attention to dementia until it affected my own family directly. From the moment it did, in 2010, I have been passionate about supporting dementia awareness and research. Dementia is the challenge of our age, we need to fight for a future in which no life is blighted by this devastating disease.

When I decided to get Iceland involved, I thought it would be a hard sell but in fact it wasn't: quite the reverse. I quickly discovered that almost every colleague and customer knows someone affected by dementia now, or has been in the past. By raising the profile of dementia in our stores and on our carrier bags, we have helped to improve awareness and understanding of the condition across the country.

I am thrilled and proud to become the first food retailer in the UK to roll out the Dementia Friends programme to all 23,000 of our store colleagues. Being part of the Dementia Friends programme will ensure we consider the needs of people living with the condition so customers and colleagues affected are understood, respected and supported. Our commitment to Dementia Friends has expanded beyond stores into our head office.

Understanding how someone living with dementia sees the world has been a real eye-opener for so many of our colleagues. It has helped to make dementia part of our everyday conversations. Whether it's our store colleagues in the aisles, cashiers at the tills, home delivery drivers, store managers or contact centre call-handlers, we are well on our way to ensuring that there is a Dementia Friend at every stage of our customers' shopping experience.

I want Iceland to be recognised as the UK's number one dementia-friendly retailer. Our vision is that our entire workforce will understand more about dementia and how to help people living with the condition. My hope is that with our fundraising, and by joining Dementia Friends, Iceland will help to make life a little easier for those affected by dementia.

I am very proud to be an ambassador for Alzheimer's Society and look forward to retailers using and implementing the guidance in this guide to make small changes which will make a big difference to people affected by dementia.



*Malcolm Walker*

**Sir Malcolm Walker**  
Alzheimer's Society Ambassador

# Introduction

In March 2012, the Prime Minister's challenge on dementia was launched to make the UK the first dementia-friendly nation by 2020. The challenge set out three key commitments to deliver across research, health and social care and the development of dementia-friendly communities.

The aim is to support people with dementia to live well in their communities and enable them to continue doing everyday things, such as going shopping or going to the bank. Support and understanding must also be given to carers and people accompanying a person with dementia. Businesses and organisations play a critical role in supporting both employees and customers affected by dementia.

## The scale of the challenge

The following statistics show the scale of the dementia challenge in the UK (Alzheimer's Society, 2013):

**850K+** 

Over 850,000 people have dementia

**80+** 

1 in 6 people over the age of 80 have dementia.



Dementia is the leading cause of death in England and Wales (ONS, 2016).



225,000 people will develop dementia this year (which is one every three minutes).

**40%+** 

The number of people over the age of 65 is projected to rise by over 40% in the next 17 years, to over 16 million (ONS, 2015).

**670K** 

There are 670,000 carers of people with dementia.



Two-thirds of people with dementia live in the community; a third live in care homes.

**40K** 

Over 40,000 younger people (under the age of 65) have dementia.



Unpaid carers save the economy over £11 billion a year.

**£26 billion** 

The cost of dementia is £26 billion a year (based on 2013 cost data).

## Why does retail matter?

**An Alzheimer's Society survey in 2013 showed that almost 80% of people with dementia listed shopping as their favourite activity.**

However, 63% of people surveyed didn't think that shops were doing enough to help people with dementia. Often people stop going shopping as their dementia progresses because they are worried about getting the support they need (Alzheimer's Society, 2013).

With the help of this guide, we hope that retailers and stores will make changes that enable people with dementia to continue shopping for as long as possible.

This can be done by creating retail environments that support the needs of someone with dementia. To help retailers understand these needs, this guide contains information about how dementia can affect an individual's experience of shopping. It also has practical guidance and tips for retailers to become more dementia friendly, as well as details of further resources and tools.



## What people with dementia have told us:

**47%**

of people said they felt part of their community.

**28%**

of people said they have stopped leaving the house.

**16%**

of people said they no longer take public transport.

**23%**

of people said they no longer go shopping.

**9%**

of people said they have given up everything they once enjoyed.

(Alzheimer's Society 2013)

“

‘I recently discovered that my local Debenhams has a ‘disability changing room’. I was delighted because my husband could come with me rather than having to wait outside, and he could assist me as I needed. It made me feel more independent and in control, the staff were very brilliant.’

‘It can be difficult knowing how to pay with your card sometimes. Is it a tap, a swipe or a PIN?’

“

‘Because I can walk about, people in shops think I’m alright. When I can’t tell them what I want they don’t have the time. I’d go out more if people had the time.’

‘I have difficulty recognising money and find it difficult using coins so only use £10 notes and trust people to give me the right change.’

# What is dementia?

Dementia is caused when the brain is damaged by diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease, or a series of strokes. It is not a natural part of the ageing process. There are different types of dementia, but the most common form is Alzheimer's disease.

Dementia is progressive, which means it begins with mild symptoms that get worse over time. Different types of dementia tend to affect people in different ways, especially in the early stages.



## A person with dementia might:

- have problems with their day-to-day memory (for example forgetting or having difficulty recalling information like their address, birthday or PIN)
- have difficulties making decisions solving problems or carrying out a sequence of tasks, (for example conducting an online transaction)
- have language problems, including difficulty following a conversation or finding the right word (for example, a person may know that they are looking for an object in a shop but they are unable to remember the right word for it)
- have visuo-perceptual difficulties (for example misinterpreting patterns or reflections, judging distances and seeing objects in three dimensions)
- lose track of the day or date, or become confused about where they are
- show changes in their mood (for example becoming frustrated or irritable, withdrawn, anxious, easily upset or unusually sad)
- show changes in behaviour such as repetitive questioning, pacing, restlessness or agitation.



## Living well with dementia

A diagnosis of dementia does not mean it is not possible to live well. Many people with dementia continue to drive and socialise. Even as dementia progresses, people can lead active, healthy lives, carry on with their hobbies and enjoy loving friendships and relationships. Someone with dementia may forget an appointment or tell you the same joke twice, but their condition does not stop them doing the things that matter the most.

# Challenges for people with dementia

People with dementia face psychological, physical and emotional barriers to being able to do more in their communities. This section overviews the challenges for all people with dementia, the challenges for carers, as well as specific challenges for people affected face when shopping.

## The top barriers, according to people with dementia from a Alzheimer's Society survey in 2013:

**69%**

“said ‘a lack of confidence’”

**68%**

“said ‘being worried about becoming confused’”

**60%**

“said ‘being worried about getting lost’”

**59%**

“said ‘mobility issues’”

**59%**

“said ‘physical health issues’”

**44%**

“said ‘not wanting to be a burden to others’”

**33%**

“said ‘lack of appropriate transport’”



**78%** 

At present, 78% of those over the age of 70 say the high street is not suited to their needs (Anchor, 2016)

A YouGov poll found that UK adults think that the barriers that people with dementia face are due to stigma or lack of understanding about dementia from the general public (65%). There is also a lack of support available for people with dementia to carry out the activities they want to do (57%) and a lack of appropriate activities for people with dementia (53%).

We asked people affected by dementia about the things that mattered most to them and what retailers could do to provide a more dementia-friendly experience. They told us about the everyday challenges that they face on a regular basis when interacting with businesses.



## For carers, the most common issues related to looking after a person with dementia are:

- worrying that the person will walk away during a shopping trip
- having enough space in changing rooms for the person and their carer to use together
- being able to accompany the person with dementia to the toilet
- difficulties helping the person in and out of a car because of narrow parking spaces
- anxiety about what other people will think, and potential embarrassment from people's responses to unusual behaviours.

### These include:

#### problems with mobility and navigating around stores or premises, for example:

- 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 cause by memory problems:

- forgetting their address, where they are, or online passwords
- 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, or forgetting to pay.

#### worries about other people's reactions:

- people not understanding their difficulties
- not following social cues
- staff not being confident to help
- the reaction of security staff to unusual behaviour.





## Report: Improving food shopping for older people, University of Hertfordshire

**A study by the University of Hertfordshire states that for older people, staying in control of their own food shopping is considered key to retaining independence and a sense of belonging to a community.**

One in 10 people aged over 65 in England and Wales suffer from, or are at risk of, malnutrition. Regular trips to the supermarket can therefore ensure that older people continue to have access to the food they want to eat. The report states that food shopping also provides older people with crucial and valued opportunities for social interaction as the risk of loneliness increases. It finds that this tradition and sense of community is being threatened by the increasing popularity of online shopping and self-checkouts.

The research also suggests that older people prefer to buy limited amounts which reduces waste and can easily be carried home. Because of this, elderly shoppers reported feeling 'disenfranchised' by money-off vouchers which apply to higher spenders, and by offers that appeal to families buying more items.

The report concludes that when supermarkets introduce creative, practical measures to improve the shopping experience for older customers, they appeal to an increasingly important target market. It highlights the leading role these businesses can play in protecting older people's food security.

# The benefits of becoming dementia friendly

Becoming a dementia-friendly organisation is not just a socially responsible step – it can also benefit businesses. There is a clear economic case for supporting people with dementia to use services and facilities. This does not mean having to prioritise dementia over other conditions or disabilities. When a business does not take action, they face significant risks, particularly around staff retention and losing revenue by neglecting the needs of clients or customers.

## Business benefits of becoming dementia-friendly

- **Competitive advantage** – research shows that 83% of people with memory problems have switched their shopping habits to places that are more accessible (Alzheimer’s Society, 2013). Becoming dementia friendly will enable businesses to retain existing customers and attract new ones.
- **Increased revenue** – there are 850,000 people with dementia and 670,000 people caring for someone affected in the UK. By becoming a leader in dementia-friendly practices, businesses will retain and build on existing custom from a range of people affected by dementia.
- **Improved customer service** – increased knowledge and awareness of dementia will make staff more confident when dealing with all types of customers. They will have a greater understanding of potential scenarios, and as a result will be able to provide better customer service and reduce the number of complaints on similar issues.
- **Enhanced brand reputation** – becoming dementia friendly will help businesses demonstrate that they are socially responsible and that they value their customers. It will also help organisations better understand the needs of their customers.
- **Future-proofing** – it is estimated that by 2021 there will be over 1 million people with dementia in the UK. The number of working carers to support this. By making changes now, businesses will be anticipating a growing need from customers and staff.
- **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. This includes making ‘reasonable adjustments’ for customers and employees with disabilities, including people living with dementia. This guide provides information to support businesses and help them comply with this legislation.



### The ‘Dementia Pound’

People with dementia and their families often have considerable disposable income and spending power, with the average household affected by dementia spending £16,800 per year. The “dementia pound” in England was worth £11bn in 2014, equating to 1.8% of household spending in England with the figure expected to rise to £22bn by 2020 (CEBR). As people develop dementia they will do and spend less, unless businesses adapt to their needs.



‘When a business gets it right for people with dementia, it gets it right for everyone.’

Person living with dementia

## The Grey Pound

It makes business sense to cater to the older market. This is because people over 50 account 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, which means becoming age friendly and dementia friendly are related.

KPMG has advised that to stay relevant, businesses should focus on the grey pound rather than targeting millennials. Older customers are 'living younger longer, are working harder, have the pensions to spend and are adapting to technology'. Despite this, many older people feel that businesses do not seek out older customers. An Age UK report found that older customers felt 'invisible', unwanted, and 'not the kind of customer' shops want (Age UK, 2017).

With rising numbers of older people, the charity Anchor says that by the end of the next decade retailers could be missing out on £4.5 billion per year if pensioners stay away from the shops. As a result there is a huge opportunity to reach out to older customers. In-store marketing campaigns targeted specifically at older people are likely to be well received and attract older people to shop regularly in stores that offer them (University of Hertfordshire).

## Social benefits of becoming dementia friendly

- **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 to live well with dementia. Becoming a dementia-friendly business means enabling people to carry on doing the things they want to do.
- **Helping people stay independent** – people with dementia want to remain independent for as long as possible. Being supported by the organisations they use plays a big part in this.
- **Improving accessibility for the whole community** – getting it right for customers with dementia means that others will benefit too, including older customers. Changes to stores such as having clear signage, or providing a quiet space, will be appreciated by everyone.
- **Reducing social isolation** – people affected by dementia are often isolated from the wider community due to a lack of understanding and stigma around the condition. Loneliness and social isolation are as harmful to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day (Holt-Lunstad, 2015), and so organisations and businesses play an important role in helping to raise awareness and increase understanding. For some customers shopping is a vital way of alleviating loneliness.



By 2030 27% of the total adult population will be over 65



Households including someone aged 65+ spend £145 billion annually (Family spending 2011 – 2014, ONS, 2014)



## What does becoming a dementia-friendly retailer involve?

**Shops and retailers can make a big difference for people affected by dementia by making a commitment to become more dementia-friendly in three key areas:**

The following guidance has been split into these areas to support existing guidance through the British Standards Institute Code of Practice for Dementia Friendly Communities.

### People



**Training and awareness**

**Supporting staff affected by dementia**

### Process



**Customer and client support**

**Information provision and signposting**

### Place



**Physical environment**

**Community engagement**

## Becoming more dementia friendly means:

- having a senior responsible owner and a working group to support the aim of becoming dementia friendly at all levels
- understanding the impact of dementia and how it changes customer needs
- considering how a business's products, processes and services can help customers affected by dementia
- using this guidance to make changes within the store and throughout the business
- supporting employees with caring responsibilities who might be affected by dementia
- supporting customers and employees who may have dementia.

## Becoming more dementia friendly doesn't mean that businesses are expected to:

- become dementia friendly immediately
- diagnose customers who have dementia
- ask customers difficult or intrusive questions
- breach existing legislation such as the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Mental Capacity Act 2005
- ignore normal security processes and procedures.



**People:**

**Supporting customers  
and employees  
affected by dementia**

## Training and awareness

### **Raising awareness of dementia, how it might impact someone and how employees can support customers and colleagues will create a more customer-focused environment.**

Employees with a greater understanding of dementia will act in a more considerate way to support all customers in a patient, kind, and respectful manner. This will enhance the reputation of the business, lead to a more satisfied customer base and increase revenue.

Having training and awareness is particularly important for front line staff and those who are most likely to directly impact customer experience. The type of training somebody should have depends on their role in the business and the type of issue they might encounter. This is explained in the table on page 22.



### **Bad experiences from people with dementia**

‘I was in a charity shop with my new puppy and a shop assistant asked its name. My mind went blank and I couldn’t remember the puppy’s name. The lady then asked my wife, in front of me if I had dementia. I thought it was funny that she didn’t just ask me. Often people react badly when you say you have dementia – they physically step back, and then treat you differently. They speak to the person you are with, instead of you.’

‘When trying to pay at the checkout I got confused with my money. The young assistant at the till asked “do you have someone with you?” followed by “don’t you think you should be at home?” I complained to the store and received a much better service on my next visit.’



### **Good experiences from people with dementia**

‘I couldn’t find what I wanted in a corner shop and told people that I had dementia. They were so kind, which is nice because you do hold back from telling people you have dementia. I was surprised they were so helpful and had time. I’d go more often because they gave me time.’

‘Kind words, time and attention go a long way! If people treat people well it’s about consideration, but I don’t want pity – it’s a fine line’

‘If someone is wearing a badge or clear uniform, I know I can approach them without a negative reaction. Sometimes it is difficult to tell people as you’re worried how they will react. Some people physically back off. Dementia has the stigma cancer used to have.’

Who is the employee?	What might they need to be aware of?	How can training support them in their role?
<p><b>Security staff</b></p>	<p><b>Mental capacity and theft.</b></p> <p>People with dementia may walk out of a shop without paying for the goods. This can be for a range of reasons such as forgetting what to do with the item or not being able to find the checkout. Some types of dementia can cause compulsive behaviour, including ‘shoplifting’. Due to the changes in their thinking or behaviour it may not be possible or appropriate to hold a person with dementia accountable for the theft. However it can still be very upsetting for everybody involved.</p>	<p>Educating security staff on issues around theft and mental capacity.</p>
<p><b>Cashiers</b></p>	<p><b>Recognising dementia and supporting someone with payments or identifying money.</b></p> <p>People with dementia can often struggle identifying coins and handling money. They may also have difficulty remembering their PIN. Dealing with the different steps of transactions and processes can be a struggle.</p>	<p>Cashiers and self-checkout supervisors should be aware of these difficulties, and know how to support people with dementia to make them feel comfortable and empowered.</p> <p>Simple things like allowing the person more time and pointing out the money they can use may help.</p>
<p><b>Managers</b></p>	<p><b>Supporting employees and customers affected by dementia.</b></p> <p>Employees who are affected by dementia in any way may need to approach a manager about any changes in circumstance.</p> <p>If there is any incident which involves a person with dementia, a manager may be a secondary participant in resolving the issue.</p>	<p>Managers should be able to demonstrate an awareness and understanding of dementia . This will allow employees affected by dementia to speak to them, and confidently approach them about any changes in circumstance.</p> <p>Managers should be equipped with the skills to confidently handle any incidents and resolve any issues with understanding and sensitivity.</p>

Who is the employee?	What might they need to be aware of?	How can training support them in their role?
<p><b>Floor staff</b></p>	<p><b>Recognising dementia and supporting people to navigate the store.</b></p> <p>It is common for people with dementia to forget the words for things they're looking for and get disorientated, particularly in busy places such as supermarkets.</p>	<p>Floor staff should know when they can support people with their shopping. They should be easily identifiable so that customers know they can offer help, and if necessary, to accompany someone with dementia to the item they're trying to find.</p>
<p><b>Delivery drivers</b></p>	<p><b>Recognising dementia and supporting someone with payments or identifying money.</b></p> <p>People with dementia can often struggle identifying coins and handling money. They may also have difficulty remembering their PIN. Dealing with the different steps of transactions and processes can be a struggle.</p>	<p>Cashiers and self-checkout supervisors should be aware of these difficulties, and know how to support people with dementia to make them feel comfortable and empowered.</p>

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‘Compulsive buying is certainly a complicated problem – does one try to prevent purchases in high street shops, at the risk of making a scene? Might be an idea to ask to speak to the store manager separately, explain the situation, see if they can help by making sure items can be returned.’

Carer of person with dementia



## Training and Consultancy

We develop and deliver high-quality training and consultancy services to individuals and organisations across all sectors. Get dementia training from the experts from just £695 per day for up to 16 people. Contact [DementiaTraining@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:DementiaTraining@alzheimers.org.uk) to find out more.

## Working with family or carers

If a person with dementia walks out of a shop without paying, this is rarely a deliberate act of theft. They may have forgotten to pay, been confused about where they were or have picked up items and forgotten what to do next.

Dementia can change the way people think. For example they may forget things or have difficulty concentrating or making decisions. This cannot be assumed for every person with dementia.

Somebody with dementia may lack inhibitions or become prone to compulsions or behaviours which are 'out of character' for them. If somebody is making an effort to hide items to take them out of the store, it could be a result of these compulsions or behaviours. They may have forgotten they picked up the items or they may be confused about what they're meant to do once they have the items (especially in a big or unfamiliar shop). If the person's thinking or behaviour has changed because of their dementia it may not be possible to hold them accountable for theft. It can still be a distressing and embarrassing experience for everybody involved.

If somebody with dementia has been found taking something without paying, the way the staff in the store handle the situation can make a huge difference. Being confronted about items that haven't been paid for can be stressful and embarrassing, both for the person with dementia and anyone accompanying them. Staff should try to identify why the incident may have happened, rather than using overly-accusatory statements or rushing to accuse someone of theft. Shop assistants and managers should understand that forgetting to pay is a symptom of dementia, and rarely a deliberate act.

Employees should be given the knowledge and confidence to manage a situation involving shoplifting. With greater employee awareness of dementia, these incidents can be handled in a way that does not embarrass or distress a person with dementia.

By giving people adequate support in store the occurrence of shoplifting will likely be minimised.

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

### Working with family or carers

If someone with dementia is a frequent customer, it could be helpful to work with them or (where appropriate) to talk to their family or carers to find a suitable approach. Finding out more about the personal history and daily activities of the person with dementia can be a way to work out how to make them feel comfortable and supported. It might also be helpful to find out if there is anything in particular which could trigger behaviours like taking things from the store without paying (for example if they feel bored). It might just be that they have forgotten they have picked items up.

Suggested arrangements to consider:

- allow family members or carers of somebody with dementia to bring items back with or without the receipt
- create a tab, so a note can be made of what has been taken and it can be paid for at another time.

### Social services

In some cases it may be necessary to contact social services. If there are persistent concerns about a particular individual and it is not possible to address the issue with help from the family this may be necessary. Persistent shoplifting could be a manifestation of other issues which are not being addressed. In this case, the person could benefit from additional support.

## Outrage at Morrisons staff who treated dementia-sufferer grandmother, 78, like a CRIMINAL and told her she would be arrested after she left without paying

- Joan Pennington, 78, began showing first signs of dementia eight months ago
- In a Morrisons in Blackburn she became disorientated and left without paying
- A security guard and female staff member interrogated her and then barred her
- Ms Pennington's outraged daughter Michelle slammed the store as a 'disgrace'

## Distraction

Engaging in general conversation with the customer, rather than specifically monitoring their shopping, can be a useful approach to lessen the chance of them taking items without paying. Making the customer feel more comfortable in this way can reduce the chances of them feeling as though they are being watched, and becoming distressed or confused. It will also provide them with a positive social interaction which is important for wellbeing.

## Additional suggestions

If the person is a regular customer, ensure all employees are aware of them and in a position to support them in store where needed. If certain employees have a greater awareness of dementia and other vulnerabilities, they should be clearly visible in the store. 'Happy to help' badges can be a useful tool.

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'We have recently found out that mum has been shop lifting from the local shop. Obviously we know she does not realise this – mum is 82 and has Alzheimer's. She has been putting the items directly into her shopping bag then leaving the shop without paying. The owner has known mum a long time but has had to tell us that she has done it three times and that he might have to ban her from the shop, which I think is extreme. We have tried to explain she needs to get a basket and take it to the till but she doesn't understand the wrongdoing. Her independence is what keeps her going... I don't know what else I can do.'

Deborah, carer for a person with dementia

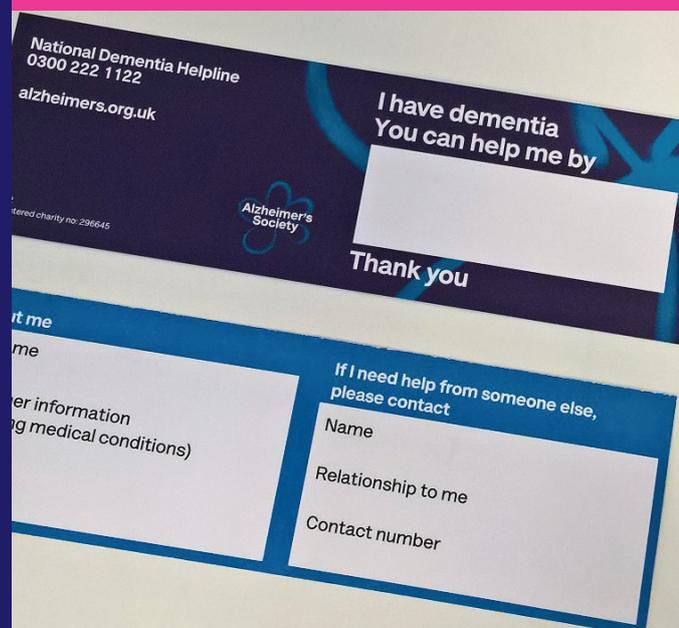
## Helpcards

Helpcards are for people with dementia to carry to make it easier for them to ask for help or assistance when they are out in the community. Shops and retailers need to be aware of these to ensure they recognise and can provide support. Helpcards, which are about the size of a credit card, are a great tool to help a person with dementia maintain their independence. They can be ordered from the Alzheimer's Society website.

There are different types of helpcards which include the following statements:

- I have memory problems
- I have dementia
- I have Alzheimer's disease

Helpcards may also include a box on the front for people to record what they might need help with, and space on the back for details of someone who can be contacted in an emergency.



## Dementia Friends for organisations

Dementia Friends is about learning more about dementia and the small ways you can help. A Dementia Friend learns a little bit more about what it's like to live with dementia and then turns that understanding into action. In the workplace, Dementia Friends can support customers and colleagues affected by dementia. They can help people to feel understood and supported and improve the customer experience. Building a network of Dementia Friends in retail businesses will help people with dementia to feel understood and supported in their communities.

There are two routes for organisations to roll out Dementia Friends, via online videos or by sector-specific presentations. To make this training sustainable, these routes need to be embedded within existing procedures such as employee inductions and refresher training. Where possible they should also be signposted on online course bookings.

## Dementia Friends presentation route

The presentation route is an interactive route including videos, a quiz and a sector-specific activity. This builds on the video to encourage employees to think about the challenges someone living with dementia might face – particularly when doing sequencing tasks as they interact in that industry. It also touches upon the challenges that people living with dementia have said they face when they interact with this industry or sector. This is designed to increase employee understanding. The presentation has instructions and can be delivered with minimal training beforehand. This means it is an easy way to introduce Dementia Friends to large numbers of employees.



For more information, consult our [Dementia-friendly business guide](#) or visit the [Dementia Friends website](#) at [dementiafriends.org.uk](http://dementiafriends.org.uk)

## Dementia Friends video route

To become a Dementia Friend via the video route, employees have to firstly watch 'Understanding Dementia' which is a four minute video on what dementia is and how it can affect someone. Then they have to watch at least one of the sector-specific videos.

### Public transport



### Paying for things



### Filling out forms



### On the phone





## Case study Iceland – Dementia Friends

**With 23,000 frontline colleagues in over 900 locations across the UK, it was a challenge to reach everyone in a coordinated way; but, with support from Alzheimer's Society, the rollout of Dementia Friends was a great success.**

There are now 23,000 employees on the shop floor who have an increased understanding of dementia and know how best to support customers living with the condition. We are now in a position to act as an example to our competitors in retail by providing exceptional customer service which considers the needs of people with dementia.

The rollout began in our Regional Talking Shop Meetings in September 2016 when our Area Talking Shop Reps became our first Dementia Friends. Talking Shop Reps are our peer-nominated employee representatives and they are heralded as our best engagement ambassadors. They have been integral in getting our colleagues enthused and on board. The second phase involved rolling out to the remainder of our Talking Shop Reps which ensured that there was a Dementia Friend in every Iceland store.

The third phase was completed on 24th July 2017 when we successfully enrolled every frontline colleague to the Dementia Friends programme during their staff meetings. This was over 22,000 employees in one day! Being a Dementia Friend is something that we want to continue to embed in the culture of Iceland, so every new starter will be introduced to the programme in their induction.

Whether it's our colleagues in the aisles, our cashiers at the tills, our home delivery drivers or our store managers, we are on our way to ensuring that there is a Dementia Friend on hand at every stage of our customers' shopping experience. Soon, our entire workforce will understand more about dementia, how to spot the symptoms and how to help people living with the condition.

Joining the Dementia Friends programme has instilled a strong sense of pride in our frontline colleagues who are able to spread awareness of the cause and put their increased knowledge into practice. Dementia is no longer a taboo subject at Iceland – in fact, it is now part of the everyday conversation. In our private Facebook group for colleagues, Talking Iceland, colleagues can share their stories and experiences to ensure that they are providing the best service to customers with dementia.





## Case study Fareham Shopping Centre

**Fareham Shopping Centre signed up to the Alzheimer's Society recognition process for dementia-friendly communities, and has been working with staff to increase their awareness of dementia. The training helped staff to handle the following incident, as told by one of the centre's security guards:**

'I was approached by a man in the shopping centre who reported that his wife has Alzheimer's and had left his side. I obtained a description of his wife and circulated it to all my colleagues and our security control room to conduct a search for the customer. I stayed with the husband and kept reassuring him that everyone was looking for his wife, as he was very upset that she had walked away from him. Police were also informed, and a little while later the lady was found in Boots. She was very shaken by the ordeal and when we reunited them it was like

piecing a jigsaw together. The family thanked us, and said that they had chosen Fareham Shopping Centre because the staff are trained in recognising the signs of dementia.'

### **Further training**

Alzheimer's Society, along with other organisations, offers bespoke dementia training which can be tailored to the individual needs of a business and staff. This can be a great tool for increasing staff understanding of dementia.



## A few examples of Alzheimer's Society training available:

### Types of courses

### Course description

#### Step inside dementia

This course aids understanding of the ways that dementia affects people. It demonstrates how to apply evidence-based practical tools to support people with dementia to live well.

It enables people to develop a deeper empathy and understanding, and gain the tools they need to be able to build positive relationships with people with dementia.

#### Understanding customers with dementia

This is an insight into the impact dementia has on everyday life, to ensure products and services meet the needs of customers with dementia.

Staff can develop the skills and confidence needed to identify consumer vulnerabilities, understand their customers' circumstances and improve their confidence in managing customer contact.

#### Supporting people with dementia on the phone

This provides people with the tools needed to be able to communicate effectively over the phone with people living with dementia.

It has information on how to recognise situations where the recipient might not interpret messages in the way they were intended, the emotions that communication difficulties can cause and how to use empathetic communication techniques

#### Retaining staff caring for a person with dementia

This is especially useful for managers and human resources teams. It equips them with the knowledge and skills to support the increasing number of people in the workforce caring for a person with dementia. It can help them to make a big difference to employee contribution, satisfaction and retention.

#### Challenging behaviours

This encourages people to embrace new approaches to support people who have dementia with complex needs. It focuses on behaviour as a form of communication. It looks at how to deliver care with respect, compassion and empathy.

#### Line managers' training for reasonable adjustments or non-visible disabilities

This course guides managers to identify when reasonable adjustments could be used to support colleagues. It highlights the range of non-visible or hidden disabilities, and is particularly focused on the practical effects and challenges of this in the workplace. It has advice on having sensitive conversations about health and disability, in order to identify and remove any barriers employees might be facing.



## Case study East of England Co-operative

**East of England Co-operative is a consumer co-op owned by over 275,000 members, including customers, staff and the local community.**

Sharon Harkin, Community Engagement Manager for the East of England Co-op, explained how focusing on dementia has had a dramatic impact on staff and transformed their ways of working:

**‘Prior to embarking on our Dementia Friendly Retail Project, dementia was effectively hidden in the workplace – no one spoke about it. Amazingly, our programme of dementia awareness and training changed that. It’s like we opened the lid on something really important!’**

East of England Co-op took a holistic approach to their training, which is multi-faceted and created to ensure employees at all levels understand the impact of dementia. The main training opportunities, which run alongside Dementia Friends sessions, are:

- **Shopping in their shoes** – a hands-on experiential learning experience actually taking place in store. Colleagues undertook a basic weekly shop whilst wearing a ‘GERT’ (ageing suit)
- **e-Learning** – an interactive online training session for store colleagues
- **face to face training sessions** – for head office colleagues
- **handling difficult situations** – a tailored session for key staff groups including Response Security Officers.

Board members and head office employees undertook a hands-on learning experience simulating shopping whilst wearing a GERT ageing suit, to be able to understand first-hand the challenges faced by their customers.

Security was identified as really important to support customers with dementia, and so all Response Security Officers undertook training in handling difficult situations. A review of store environments was also undertaken. In this, focus groups identified physical challenges and quick fixes such as signage, seating, coloured toilet seats and removing coins from trolleys.

Work was also undertaken in the wider community and with local organisations such as Ipswich Dementia Action Alliance. Together they helped to make Ipswich a dementia-friendly town. On top of this, over 3,000 colleagues have signed up as Dementia Friends.

East of England Co-op have also incorporated a dementia-friendly approach into their HR practices, striving for a ‘culture of openness’. They are achieving this by re-assessing their policies, sharing stories through internal communications, promoting the use of positive language and ensuring they are ‘caring for the carer’.

## Supporting employees

If somebody has dementia, or is caring for somebody who has, it does not necessarily mean that they have to stop working. Organisations and businesses should be equipped to support any employees who are affected by dementia to continue working for as long as possible. Failing to do so is against the law, and is damaging to employers and the wider economy. Supporting people to work for as long as possible can improve employee retention, reduce recruitment costs, and increase productivity and revenue. Working carers should be supported since it makes good business sense, and is part of long-term planning for an ageing society. As part of the phasing out of the retirement age, employers must be prepared to address the needs of people with dementia at work.

Under the Equality Act 2010 employers are legally required to avoid discrimination. They must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that people with dementia are not disadvantaged in the workplace. Carers of people with dementia are protected under the Equality Act through 'discrimination by association'.

They also have the right to request flexible working and time off if they need it. These rights should be promoted internally so that all employees are aware they can access them. Having a carer's policy and promoting flexible or part-time working can support carers to balance their paid work with their caring responsibilities. As a result, this helps businesses retain valued employees and cut recruitment costs.

In the UK, one person develops dementia every three minutes. Although dementia is more common in people over the age of 65, people as young as 30 can be diagnosed. There may be people who have dementia in the workplace. As such, reasonable adjustments should be made so that they can work for as long as it is possible. Line managers should be given training and guidance to know how to support employees with dementia.



**For more information on supporting employees who are affected by dementia to continue working, consult our Dementia-friendly business guide.**

## Dementia in the workplace

The following statistics indicate the impact of dementia on the UK working environment.

- Nearly 1 in 9 employees in the UK have a caring responsibility.
- 670,000 people in the UK care for older relatives or people living with dementia.
- There are 40,000 people with young-onset dementia (diagnosed under the age of 65) in the UK.
- Currently, 18% of people diagnosed with dementia under the age of 65 continue to work after their diagnosis.
- 89% of employers believe that dementia will become a bigger issue for their organisation as the workforce ages, the retirement age rises and the number of people with dementia increases (CEBR, 2014).
- The Centre for Economics and Business estimates that the average person diagnosed with dementia while still at work will have been in their current job for at least nine years.
- The early retirement of those diagnosed with dementia costs English businesses £627 million a year.



**Process:**  
**Customer and  
client support**

**In any retail business, the needs of people with dementia should be considered. This will ensure that products and services are relevant and people with dementia are safeguarded when necessary.**

Engaging with local people living with dementia or specialist organisations can help businesses understand how to meet specific needs. People with dementia may not want to self-identify, or may not be aware that they have dementia. This needs to be considered in all systems, processes and support mechanisms to ensure all customers who need support have access to it.

### Online shopping

Although many people do still prefer to go into a store, shopping online can be very convenient. It can be particularly helpful for people who have mobility issues, or who find retail environments difficult to cope with.

People who do shop online might not always be confident with the processes involved. There should be measures in place to support them throughout the online journey. For example, a clearly signed 'help' button or contact telephone number could allow someone to seek support with their shopping if they get stuck.

“

'I'm umming and arrring over online ordering. Part of me thinks it would save the hassle, the other part thinks having to go [to the supermarket], means I get out the house. I really need to at least see other people who know nothing about carers, endless washing & blooming dementia!'

Sam, living with dementia

### Self-checkouts

Going shopping can provide people with important social interaction. Keeping socially active can help people with dementia to feel more independent and mentally stimulated and can reduce loneliness. The rise in automated self-checkouts in many stores removes an important part of social interaction. Using the machines can be isolating for vulnerable people and intimidating for a person with dementia. A recent survey found that automated checkout machines put off about a quarter of older people from going shopping as they find it 'intimidating' and 'unfriendly'.

Dementia can affect people's thinking and ability to complete processes. This can make the idea of having to complete a transaction alone from start to finish challenging and daunting. It also creates pressure if the person does not respond quickly enough (Centre for Future Studies, 2017). Self-checkouts should be an option for people with only a few items or limited time, as opposed to the only option for all customers.

A report carried out by the charity Anchor, and produced by the Centre for Future Studies consultancy group, suggests that automated checkouts deter 24% of older people from shopping. It states that there is a 'dire need for the High Street to re-invent itself' if it is going to be accessible and attractive to older people.

“

'One thing I cannot do when shopping is to use these self-service tills, as I find it very off putting when any machine speaks to me. It's the same as these gadgets that people have in their cars, telling them which direction to take.'

Simon, living with dementia



### 'Slow shopping' lanes and targeted discounts

Slow lanes or 'relaxed lanes' are increasingly being introduced in supermarkets as an option for those who require a bit more support. Customers are given more time and space, as well as seating where required and often an allocated day to use the store at less busy times.

Slow lanes and designated hours are supporting older customers and those with hidden disabilities to continue to use their supermarket, but at their own pace. Support with coin recognition and understanding value signs would also aid individuals when paying for their shopping.

Targeted discounts and offers can also drive sales and encourage shopping at specific times, for example offering discounts to over 60s or in-store perks to loyalty card holders.



Consider whether combining a relaxed shopping hour with other conditions will support the needs of customers with dementia. Often recommendations for 'Autism friendly' relaxed hours recommend can be detrimental for people with dementia. Dimming the lights can make it difficult to navigate and can increase the risk of falls, turning off announcements can make it difficult to know where to go for help and turning off escalators can make it challenging for those with limited mobility to visit different floors.



## B&Q's Diamond Club

B&Q offer customers aged over 60 a 'Diamond Card' which entitles them to an extra 10% off on Wednesdays on top of their existing Club Card. This encourages older patrons to continue to shop in the store and to visit on days that are likely to be less hectic.

## Audit of processes, procedures and support mechanisms

The graphic below is a guide to the areas of a store which should be audited, and the considerations to keep in mind:

### Strategy

- Is supporting customers or employees affected by dementia included within your organisation's aims, ethos or objectives?
- Do you have a vulnerable customers strategy or team?
- How does dementia fit in to your vulnerable customers strategy or policy?
- How are the needs of people with dementia considered when making business change decisions, such as closing stores or altering products or services?

### Support mechanisms

- Do customers have an opportunity to inform staff about their dementia, or know that they can?
- Do employees understand flags and markers that somebody may have dementia or be vulnerable to be aware of?
- Are customers asked if they require support when entering a shop, browsing and when paying?

### Products or services

- Are products or services suitable for people living with dementia?
- How could adaptations be made to products or services?
- Is written information clear and in a easy to read font on products or instructions?
- Are assistance aids available (for example magnifying glasses)?
- Are the needs of people affected by dementia considered in the development of products or services?

### Processes and procedures

- How are complaints made from people affected by dementia recorded or logged to understand their issues or concerns?
- How are complaints monitored and acted upon, and what procedures are in place to ensure they are acted on appropriately?



**Place:**

**Physical  
environment**

**Accessible environments are incredibly important to support people living with dementia. A dementia-friendly, accessible environment can support people to continue to do things for themselves for longer and feel confident accessing their community.**

Small changes (for example to layout or signage) can reduce stress and confusion. This can help somebody with dementia to stay independent, and can reassure their family and carers of their safety when out in the community. Not only does this enhance self-esteem, it also reinforces the person's identity and quality of life (Marshall, 2001). Accessibility should be a consideration for all aspects of the environment including internal and external spaces, both built and natural.

**Why do places and spaces matter?**

Dementia can affect people's visio-perception, their orientation and cause difficulties when interacting with environments. This means that people with dementia may find many everyday tasks more difficult, including using the stairs, and navigating through a building. Dementia can cause people to become agitated in unfamiliar environments. Well-designed environments have the power to stimulate, refresh, remind and give pleasure to people with dementia and other users, and are accessible and easy to navigate.

The Kings Fund (2013) found that improving environments for people with dementia can:

- promote independence
- reduce falls
- improve employee morale, recruitment and retention.
- increase engagement in meaningful activities
- reduce incidence of agitation and challenging behaviour
- reduce need for anti-psychotic medication
- improve nutrition and hydration
- encourage greater carer involvement



Older people face a range of difficulties when out and about in shops and businesses. More than half of respondents to an Age UK survey (which represents people aged 75+) cited 'not enough toilets' as a regular issue. About half of respondents cited 'not enough seats in shops'. Age UK, 2017

## Physical environment checklist

### Entrance

- ✓ Consider the welcome and entrance to the shop or store. Are employees around and visible to welcome and spot any vulnerable customers who might need support?

### Signage and navigation

- ✓ Ensure clear signage to and from store facilities, including toilets, different departments, customer service desks and payment points. It can be empowering for a person living with dementia to have the confidence to navigate easily around a store.
- ✓ Ensure clear signage at eye level and above for different aisles. Think about the use of clear graphics and images which could help if someone forgets what an object is called, or is having difficulties with communication. Consider signs with words and images to make the location of products as clear as possible and assist with store navigation.
- ✓ Make sure there is a good contrast between the sign wording and the surface it is mounted on.
- ✓ Have a clear map of the store at the entrance so people can see where they need to go with clear landmarks or features that people can orientate themselves to whilst shopping.





### Liquid Laundry Detergent Pods Pose Lethal Risk for Adults With Dementia

Consumer Reports recommends keeping the potent detergent-filled packets out of households with cognitively impaired adults

## Store layout and merchandising

- ✓ Consider placing small warning or 'information' signs next to products that could be hazardous. For example, Consumer Reports found that some people with cognitive difficulties can mistake items such as laundry pods or tablets for sweets. Signs will inform customers of the potential risks.
- ✓ People with dementia respond well to routine, and can be easily disorientated. Regularly changing the layout of stores can be hugely confusing and upsetting as it can reduce the familiarity of stores. To avoid causing confusion, consider the frequency at which the store layout and position of products changes.

## Slow or 'relaxed' shopping

- ✓ Slow shopping schemes allow more time and support for those who want or need it. Customers are greeted at the entrance and offered assistance with their shopping. Chairs are put at the ends of aisles to allow people to have a rest.
- ✓ Consider promoting 'relaxed shopping' during specific hours when the store is quieter for customers who might become overwhelmed during busy periods and help is on hand.
- ✓ During these slow periods consider offering additional wellbeing services and provide information on support available in the area.



## Think about

When planning slow or 'relaxed' shopping we recommend consider your audience. Aspects of dementia-friendly and autism-friendly slow or 'relaxed' shopping can conflict. Autism friendly shopping hours call for the lights to be dimmed, which is not recommended for people affected by dementia. Low lighting can make it difficult and dangerous to navigate an environment. People with dementia might get confused and mistake what they are looking at, in low lighting they may see a shadow as a level change or hole which could lead to falls or trips.



“

‘It’s bad enough trying to work out what you want, and then trying to find it... It’s becoming like a race track chicane, so we are going from one side of the aisle to another, dodging everyone else while trying to remember what we came in for, and seeing where it’s been hidden. I have heard shopping is being called retail therapy these days, which makes me wonder what people get out of it, because I do think that many need a therapist by the time they get their food shopping and get back home.’

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Ken, person living with dementia

## Tills and counters



Consider displaying information about dementia support at the till as well as coin recognition charts which show the different denominations and shapes of coins.

## Seating

-  For those who have mobility issues, the prospect of going out into the community with no opportunity for a rest can be daunting. As a result, lack of seating in supermarkets and stores can act as a real barrier, leading to exclusion.
-  Arrange to have some well-signposted seating and resting places available near exits and checkouts to put customers at ease.
-  Providing additional seating is a simple change to make that will encourage consumers to continue visiting and will drive footfall. It will also enable people to continue to be out in the community, reducing the risk of isolation and loneliness.

60% 

60% of older people said they are worried that there will be a lack of seating if they need to rest (Centre for Future Studies). This can be limiting, since older people often depend on going to the shops daily – particularly if they do not use online retailers.

“

‘When I was able to take my mum out shopping, there was a general problem of finding somewhere for an elderly person to sit down for a short break. The chairs and benches in shopping malls tend to be too low. If the supermarket wasn’t too busy, Mum would sit on a chair in the cafeteria section, but this is rather cheeky if they are busy. She’d sometimes have a drink, but needed someone to carry it over to a table for her. I think large supermarkets can be rather dangerous places for elderly, disabled people and there is nowhere to sit down if they feel tired halfway round.

Also, why is it that disabled parking spaces always seem to be positioned where it’s difficult to have a good view for reversing out? At our local shop, the cash dispenser is by the disabled spaces, tempting people to pull up for their money.

It is quite worrying when children run around or push toy cars about in supermarket aisles, as once or twice Mum nearly got knocked over by them. It would also be a good idea if it was possible to have the proper food all together in one place, and the junk food at the opposite end of the store, so we don’t have to waste time walking past it.’



## Standing Up 4 Sitting Down

Standing Up 4 Sitting Down (#su4sd) is Anchor's national initiative. It aims to improve people's access to their local shops and high street by increasing the amount of seating available to those who need it. There are now over 2000 retail outlets across the country supporting Standing Up 4 Sitting Down, pledging to maintain the number of seats people can use if they want to rest mid-shop. Stores which have signed up include Morrisons, Debenhams, Argos and Sainsbury's.



Find out more about the Standing Up 4 Sitting Down campaign on Anchor's website: [anchor.org.uk](http://anchor.org.uk)

## Quiet spaces

- ✔ Provide a quiet space in the store where people can take time out if they need to. 'Safe haven' areas may already be available in-store through local policing or neighbourhood schemes.

## Lighting

- ✔ Ensure entrances are well-lit and that lighting throughout the store is consistent and natural where possible. Minimise shadows, glares and pools of light. This will reduce the challenges imposed by changes in perception for people living with dementia



## Flooring and shiny surfaces

-  Changes in floor surfaces can cause some confusion for people with perceptual problems. Steps can also be trip hazards.
-  Changes in perception mean that some people with dementia can be confused or disorientated by mirrors, so think about their size and position in the store.
-  Reflections, (for example from mirrors or slippery surfaces) can cause confusion are best avoided where possible.
-  Patterns on the floor can also cause problems for those with perceptual problems, as they may be misperceived as things to be avoided. This means someone becomes less confident in the environment.
-  Mats or rugs that are a different colour to the rest of the floor can increase confusion and a person with dementia may avoid stepping on it because it looks like a hole. This can present a barrier before the person has even entered the shop.

## Noise

-  For people with dementia, background noise can be distracting and disorientating. Supermarkets, shopping centres and other retail outlets can be particularly noisy environments. This is a problem which is often exacerbated when music or radio stations are played in stores. Excessive background noise can impact on an individual's ability to concentrate, become disorientating or interfere with hearing aids.
-  Consider whether music is necessary in the store. Consider whether it can be switched off at certain times and promoted as part of a 'slow' or 'relaxed' shopping period.

## Pipedown

This campaign has worked with organisations such as M&S and Waterstones to crack down on ‘piped background music’ being played in their stores. Asda has agreed to trial ‘quiet hours’ in response to the campaign. According to Pipedown, people with conditions such as autism, ME and tinnitus find that piped music can trigger or aggravate their condition. This is leading to exclusion from public spaces in ways which break the Equality Act 2010.



For more information about Pipedown visit [pipedown.org.uk](http://pipedown.org.uk)

## Changing spaces and toilets

-  Toilets can be particularly disorientating for people living with dementia, as the many doors can cause confusion over how to get out. Toilets that are not clearly signed can cause undue distress. Installing clear signage and ‘way out’ signs can provide reassuring signposting for people affected by dementia. It also makes the route clearer to all customers to quickly find the exit.
-  Advertise that employees can open accessible toilets for customers, and advertise to customers where they can apply for a RADAR key if they need one.
-  Toilet seats that are of 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.
-  Changing Places meet the needs of those with disabilities that average accessible toilets do not. They have the right equipment, for example a changing bench and adequate space for someone to change with the help of a carer. They provide a safe and dignified environment which can be vital for people living with dementia and their carers.
-  For people with dementia, or older people, it can be important to plan outings around where they can access toilets. Public lavatories are not a statutory provision, and many councils no longer pay businesses to take part in community toilet schemes. In London, toilet facilities in stores such as Marks & Spencer, Tesco, John Lewis, Sainsbury’s and Asda are available to use without the need to buy anything as part of the Mayor’s Open London scheme. Unfortunately however, the companies are not all keen to display signs alerting people to their available lavatories.

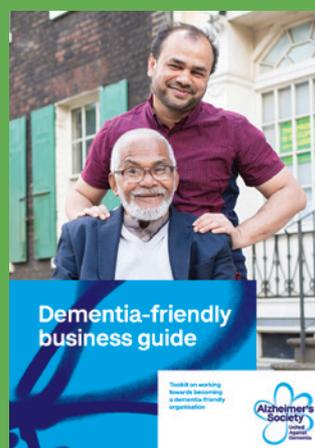
## Sainsbury's: Clear signs to support customers with dementia

Sainsbury's have installed 'way out' signs across all their toilets to clearly mark the exit. Former carer and Sainsbury's customer Angela Clayton-Turner commented, 'I have been talking about the difficulty my husband had finding his way out of public toilets, for some years. I am absolutely over the moon that Sainsbury's have taken this problem on board. Hopefully where Sainsbury's leads other organisations will follow!'

Sainsbury's are also working to change the signage of their accessible toilets to reflect the 'invisible nature' of some health conditions which are not physically obvious. People may fear confrontation when using accessible toilets if they don't fit the image of a person with disabilities. Installing this sign ensures that those using the facilities feel as comfortable as possible. Sainsbury's have also made sure that the new signs are embossed, making it easy for those who are visually impaired to recognise that it is an accessible toilet.

## Further steps

Further changes might involve some investment, for example, considering dementia-friendly elements when the store is being refurbished or refitted (as budgets allow). Devoting some additional resources will help to future-proof businesses by making stores more accessible for people with dementia and their carers.



**See our Dementia-friendly business guide for more information and a comprehensive checklist.**

The environment immediately outside the store also needs to be considered, particularly if there is a car parking area. Creating larger parking spaces, or offering 'family spaces' (rather than just 'mother and baby' spaces) can make a real difference. This can be particularly helpful for those experiencing cognitive difficulties who might be struggling to get a blue badge.

It may not always be possible to change the physical environment in and around the store. If this is the case, it is even more important that employees have a good understanding of dementia. With basic training, employees can be on hand to support people who are confused or having difficulties.





**Place:**

**Community and  
staff engagement**

## Dementia Friendly Communities

**There are huge benefits for businesses and organisations to engage with their local community. It will help organisations to gain a better understanding of the needs of their customers, and allows them to support local staff to raise their local profile. From campaigning and fundraising, to delivering services and funding research, organisations and volunteers are active in every area of our work.**

Dementia Friendly Communities are geographical communities which are committed to working towards making their area accessible, inclusive and supportive for people living with and affected by dementia. Everyone shares the responsibility for ensuring that people with dementia feel understood, valued and able to contribute to their community.

Local branches of shops and stores should join their local community to support and engage with the issues that matter to local people. This provides a support mechanism, network of local businesses and a platform to engage the local community and customer base. Shops and supermarkets should work with key transport organisations (including local taxi companies and bus companies) to ensure they are aware of the ways dementia might affect their customers. They should also be aware of the support available in store to signpost any of their passengers or customers affected.

If there is not already a group in your area, you could consider starting your own. To view a list of recognised Dementia Friendly Communities go to [alzheimers.org.uk/dementiafriendlycommunities](http://alzheimers.org.uk/dementiafriendlycommunities)



### What's the difference between Dementia Action Alliances (DAA) and Dementia Friendly Communities (DFCs)?

Dementia Action Alliance is the leadership and infrastructure model used to gather a community and organisations together to develop an action plan.

Dementia Friendly Communities is the yearly recognition process for communities which are working on a minimum of one or more of the British Standards Institute (BSI) Areas for action.

## Signposting to local support

- Include information and leaflets on local Alzheimer's Society, Age UK and carers services in deliveries to customers and in store.
- Explore whether schemes could be introduced to support food and prescription delivery staff to regularly check on vulnerable people receiving deliveries. Where appropriate they could provide feedback to family members or the person who has ordered the items to be delivered to them. This would ensure that isolated individuals are supported and safeguarded.
- Inform delivery staff about processes that can safeguard and signpost customers to further support.
- Ensure employees know how they can contact local social services or refer customers to Alzheimer's Society services.
- Work with local volunteer driver schemes and Community Transport to support older people and people living with dementia to get to the store.



## Case study Boots provides hospital pamper day

Employees from a Boots store visited a local hospital to treat people with dementia and their families to a pampering session. The manager and beauty adviser treated the patients to hand massages, nail painting and fragrance sampling. The pair were 'overwhelmed' at how the use of smells helped bring back memories and put a smile on patients' faces. All employees at the Boots store are encouraged to become Dementia Friends, which has encouraged empathy towards customers living with dementia.

## Using the store as a community space

Some stores may have a suitable space to host activities for people with dementia. Alzheimer's Society run sessions which could be hosted in a shop space including:

- a Dementia Friends session
- Singing for the Brain®
- Dementia Café
- 'tea and talk' events.

Shops could also host community health services such as mobile GP surgeries, visits from chiropodists, dentists, opticians, occupational health, mental health services and physiotherapists. Key information about dementia should be displayed to signpost customers to further specialist support.



To see the information we have available go to [alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/publications-factsheets](https://alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/publications-factsheets)

By inviting people affected by dementia into the store, retailers can show their commitment to becoming more dementia friendly.



For more information on how you can be involved in Alzheimer's Society services and support visit [alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/your-support-services](https://alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/your-support-services)

## Outreach schemes and mobile shops

Outreach services can help to reach those who find it difficult to travel to a shop or store. This could be particularly helpful for local rural communities, independent living facilities and care homes. By teaming up with other local businesses, retail organisations can provide a 'one stop shop' or pop up shop in key facilities like rural banks, post offices or community centres. Working with local community transport or bus companies to put on specific or regular transport services will enable isolated customers to reach the shop or store.



## Case study Highcross Shopping Centre – becoming dementia friendly

Highcross is the first shopping centre in the UK to successfully go through the ‘Working to become dementia friendly’ recognition process as part of their local dementia-friendly community. Highcross is raising public awareness of dementia and implementing a sustainable programme of staff training. The environment of the shopping centre has also been amended to support people with dementia.

### Design review

Highcross set up focus group meetings to review the existing built environment and redesign of new facilities. Following this, the below changes were recommended:

- reviewing wayfinding
- redecorating toilet facilities with contrasting colours to differentiate the walls and basin units. This will help facilities to stand out
- new clearer signage to the toilets
- make toilet symbols more visible to highlight the different toilets
- new ‘furniture pods’ which are more practical and user friendly
- removing metal from the wall as it was too reflective and disorientating
- clearer customer information points
- a dedicated ‘customer service lounge’ manned during opening hours and designated as a ‘Safe place’ within Leicester city centre
- considering that individual shops within the shopping centre have different layouts, branding and signage. Employees were trained to approach and offer support to all customers (for example if they need help to find an item).

Working with their local Dementia Friendly Community has enabled Highcross to develop and work to an action plan to drive their progress.

### Entrance to toilets – before and after



## Volunteering

Volunteering for a local Alzheimer's Society, Age UK or dementia service is an opportunity for organisations and businesses to support their local community. Organisational volunteer time could be used to offer skills-based volunteering or local support for key services.

There are many ways in which you can volunteer at Alzheimer's Society, either as an individual or as a team. Look at the Dementia-friendly business guide or the Alzheimer's Society website for some ideas. If you can't find what you are looking for or want to discuss your requirements in more detail, please contact [volunteers@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@alzheimers.org.uk)

## Fundraising

Alzheimer's Society has a calendar of national events including Memory Walk, Cupcake Day and Elf Day as well as challenge events which stores and employees can get involved in.



For more information visit [alzheimers.org.uk/fundraise](http://alzheimers.org.uk/fundraise)



### Case study Safe Places scheme

**The Safe Places scheme helps vulnerable people if they need support, or feel scared or at risk while they are out and about in the community.**

If someone is having difficulty they look for the Safe Places logo being displayed in a nearby window. Once you become a Safe Place your employees will be trained to be able to help those in distress.



For more information visit [safeplaces.org.uk](http://safeplaces.org.uk)



### Case study Side by Side scheme – Rosemary and Eilish

**Rosemary was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in January 2016 and was paired up with Eilish, a volunteer for Alzheimer's Society through the Side by Side scheme.**

Eilish and Rosemary were matched in March 2016 and meet every Monday morning for a couple of hours. The pair often go shopping together in their local Marks & Spencer generally followed by a cup of tea and slice of cake in the café. Rosemary sometimes struggles with money when it comes to paying for items, which is where Eilish provides a helping hand. They view the Side by Side scheme as mutually beneficial, as the pair have become good friends and describe their friendship as 'a laugh a minute!'



## Case study Community involvement at Sainsbury's

**As part of the company's agenda on 'active engagement with dementia', Sainsbury's stores are supporting their local communities in a number of ways. Several examples are listed below.**

- In Stirling, store managers have attended community-focused dementia meetings to find out how their store can better support their customers living with dementia.
- In Cambridge, the Coldhams Lane store hosts a dementia café (an Alzheimer's Society service) in the customer restaurant each month. Led by qualified specialists and supported by local volunteers, these regular social groups reduce isolation and improve the wellbeing of people with dementia. They provide a safe, comfortable and supportive environment, and encourage attendees to socialise and get out and about in their community.
- The Bretton and Peterborough stores have invited Alzheimer's Society representatives to the store to talk to customers about dementia and outline what local support services are available.
- In Darlington, the superstore has joined the Darlington Dementia Action Alliance, committing to improve the lives of people affected by dementia throughout their local area.



## Case study Iceland – Volunteering and fundraising

**Our colleagues both in retail and at head office have been extremely passionate about fundraising for our charity partner, Alzheimer's Society.**

Our annual Charity Week is a huge occasion when we give each store the flexibility to raise money for a good cause. This year we were overwhelmed with the positive attitude and amount of effort that went into raising over £594,000 with more donations still flooding in.

To do this we liaised with Alzheimer's Society to organise volunteers to help with fundraising in over 400 stores. From learning about the work that Alzheimer's Society does, some colleagues have been inspired to raise money for the charity off their own backs too, with some people taking part in skydives, Memory Walks, marathons and even a truck pull!

By making changes to the way we, as a company, think about dementia, we hope to build on the trust our customers have in us as a retailer. Ultimately, we want to be able to offer our customers a place to shop where they feel welcome, supported and cared about.

# Useful organisations and resources

The following organisations can offer guidance or resources for someone affected by dementia.

## General resources

### **Alzheimer's Society publications**

[alzheimers.org.uk/publications](https://alzheimers.org.uk/publications)

Publications order line: 0300 303 5933

Alzheimer's Society publications provide information about all aspects of dementia.

### **Dementia Connect Online Directory**

[alzheimers.org.uk/dementiaconnect](https://alzheimers.org.uk/dementiaconnect)

Alzheimer's Society online dementia services directory for anyone affected by dementia in England, Wales or Northern Ireland. Find support in your local area.

### **Dementia Friendly Communities**

[alzheimers.org.uk/dementiafriendlycommunities](https://alzheimers.org.uk/dementiafriendlycommunities)

Find more information, resources and guidance online to set up a dementia friendly community.

### **National Dementia Helpline**

[alzheimers.org.uk/helpline](https://alzheimers.org.uk/helpline)

0300 222 1122

For information, support or advice about dementia call our helpline.

Please see the website for up to date opening hours.

### **Talking Point Online Community**

[alzheimers.org.uk/talkingpoint](https://alzheimers.org.uk/talkingpoint)

Talking Point is a support and discussion forum for anyone affected by dementia.

### **Worried about your memory**

[alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/publications-and-factsheets/worried-about-your-memory](https://alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/publications-and-factsheets/worried-about-your-memory)

This free resource from Alzheimer's Society is designed to help you understand more about memory loss, so if you are worried – either about your own or someone else's memory – you can seek advice and, if necessary, get treatment.

**Age UK**

0800 055 6112 (advice line, 8am-7pm every day)  
[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

Aims to improve older life for everyone through information and advice, services, campaigns, products, training and research.

**Alzheimer's Scotland**

0808 808 3000 (24 hour free helpline)  
[www.alzscot.org](http://www.alzscot.org)

Provides a wide range of specialist services for people with dementia and their carers in Scotland.

**Carers Trust**

0300 772 9600  
[www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)

Works to improve support, services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring for a family member or friend.

**Carers UK**

0808 808 7777 (advice line, Mon–Tues 10–4)  
[www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

Provides information and advice about caring, alongside practical and emotional support for carers.

**Citizens Advice**

03444 111 444 (England)  
03444 77 20 20 (Wales)  
[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

Your local Citizens Advice can provide information and advice in confidence or point you in the right direction. To find your nearest Citizens Advice, look in the phone book, ask at your local library or look on the Citizens Advice website. Opening times vary.

**Dementia Action Alliance**

[www.dementiaaction.org.uk](http://www.dementiaaction.org.uk)

The alliance for organisations across England to connect, share best practice and take action on dementia.

**Dementia Friends**

[www.dementiafriends.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriends.org.uk)

An Alzheimer's Society initiative to change people's perceptions on dementia. It aims to transform the way the nation thinks, acts and talks about the condition.

**Dementia UK**

0800 808 6678 (advice line)  
[www.dementiauk.org](http://www.dementiauk.org)

Provides Admiral Nurses to support families living with dementia.

**Rare Dementia Support**

020 3448 4773  
[www.raredementiasupport.org](http://www.raredementiasupport.org)

Runs specialist support group services for individuals living with, or affected by rarer forms of dementia.

**Lewy Body Society**

0131 473 2385  
[www.lewybody.org](http://www.lewybody.org)

A charity that aims to raise awareness of dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB) for the general public and educate those in the medical profession and decision-making positions about all aspects of the condition. They also support research into DLB.

**Local Government Association**

[www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

A politically-led, cross-party organisation supporting local governments. Provides practical support to corporations which can be tailored to specific service areas such as adults' health and care.

**Public Health England**

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england)

Public Health England exist to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. PHE is an executive agency, sponsored by the Department of Health and Social Care.

**YoungDementia UK**

01993 776295  
[www.youngdementiauk.org](http://www.youngdementiauk.org)

A charity which helps people whose lives are affected by young-onset dementia.

## Retail specific resources

### **Changing Places**

[www.changing-places.org/](http://www.changing-places.org/)

Changing Places toilets have a changing bench, hoist and plenty of space.

### **Dementia-friendly business guide**

[alzheimers.org.uk/business](http://alzheimers.org.uk/business)

Our free guide helps businesses to become more dementia-friendly.

### **Dementia-friendly signage**

[alzheimers.org.uk/downloads/download/2055/dementia\\_friendly\\_signage](http://alzheimers.org.uk/downloads/download/2055/dementia_friendly_signage)

Downloadable dementia-friendly signs to make environments easier to navigate for people with dementia.

### **Food Provision in Later Life, University of Hertfordshire**

[www.herts.ac.uk/research/informing-public-policy/food-and-public-health/food-for-young-and-old/improving-food-shopping-for-older-people-findings-spark-national-debate](http://www.herts.ac.uk/research/informing-public-policy/food-and-public-health/food-for-young-and-old/improving-food-shopping-for-older-people-findings-spark-national-debate)

Report from University of Hertfordshire Food Provision in Later Life study on how supermarkets can better meet the needs of older people.

### **Pipedown**

[www.pipedown.org.uk](http://www.pipedown.org.uk)

A campaign to stop unwanted piped music in public places.

### **Standing Up 4 Sitting Down**

<https://www.anchor.org.uk/media/campaigns-and-research>

A national initiative run by the charity Anchor which aims to improve people's access to their local shops and high street by increasing the amount of seating available to those who need it.

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<https://www.diy.com/bandqclub/>

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[www.home.kpmg.com/uk/en/home/media/press-releases/2016/05/millennials-v-grey-poundwho-holds-the-key-to-future-retail-succ.html](http://www.home.kpmg.com/uk/en/home/media/press-releases/2016/05/millennials-v-grey-poundwho-holds-the-key-to-future-retail-succ.html)

**Changing Places Scheme**

<http://www.changing-places.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=HVUZNzjz1KA%3d&tabid=76>

**University of Hertfordshire, Improving food shopping for older people**

[https://www.herts.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/174194/improving-food-shopping-for-older-people-uh-research-briefing.pdf](https://www.herts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/174194/improving-food-shopping-for-older-people-uh-research-briefing.pdf)

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**Alzheimer's Society is the UK's leading dementia charity.  
We provide information and support, improve care, fund research,  
and create lasting change for people affected by dementia.**

If you have any concerns about Alzheimer's disease or any other form of dementia, visit **alzheimers.org.uk** or call the **Alzheimer's Society National Dementia Helpline** on **0300 222 1122**. (Interpreters are available in any language. Calls may be recorded or monitored for training and evaluation purposes.)

**Alzheimer's Society**

43–44 Crutched Friars  
London EC3N 2AE

**0300 222 1122**

**info@alzheimers.org.uk**  
**alzheimers.org.uk**

Code 960



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