

Making public transport more dementia friendly

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“Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.” Arthur Ashe, tennis champion and social activist. The focus should be on taking small steps and not trying to change the world.

The **Dementia Friends Scheme** is a one hour free session to learn about dementia. Dementia friends can undertake a day’s training to become a dementia champion. Organisations have trained a member of staff to be a dementia champion and then deliver the training in-house to other staff.

Public Transport

West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) is working with 5 Dementia Action Alliances (coalition of organisations). WYCA has an action plan:

- Train staff in bus stations, Access Bus and the Metro Support Line, as they weren’t confident to help and support people with dementia. Feedback is that they have been able to use lots of practical tips from the training.
- Train bus drivers across about 40 bus companies. There is limited time to train, but WYCA is making inroads, e.g. Arriva in Wakefield
- All bus stations are part of the Safer Places Scheme, where people can seek assistance.
- The DDA’s co-ordinator is in touch with Access Bus providers.
- Worked with Bradford Council to carry out a dementia friendly audit of the Interchange, focusing on the physical environment. Working on taking forward recommendations.

How can it work in your area?

- You need to find the ‘good fairy’, the right person in an organisation.
- Travel Assistance Cards available from Metro to show a bus driver so that they understand your need.

Workshop participants discussed issues and made a pledge. These included:

- I will find out if community transport schemes in Leeds have participated in dementia friendly training. If not, to ask trainers to make them aware of it.
- I will ask Kirklees Council to become dementia friendly
- Talk to a full council meeting to embed dementia in everything they do
- Use contacts in the police, fire service, doctors etc. to identify volunteers who can transport people.
- Let carers know help is available for confidence in driving.
- Find out what support a neighbour, who has recently been diagnosed with dementia, might need.
- Talk to local residents groups and raise awareness.
- Ask Metro to re-instate service information on bus shelters.
- Talk to service providers to focus on ways of improving transport facilities for older people.

- Get the Department for Transport to recognize their role in increasing awareness of what can be done to provide greater access for people with dementia, and other hidden disabilities.
- Service to display the dementia friendly stickers on all Leeds City Council mini buses.
- To ensure community transport drivers and passenger assistants are trained.
- Explore what private taxi companies and coach companies are doing.
- Contact local council to find out what they have done with their plans for Safer Places.

‘The Power of Sheffield Journeys’: a partnership of South Yorkshire PTE, Stagecoach, 1st Community Trust with Department for Transport and Sheffield Hallam University. Developed an archive of ‘travelers’ eye view’ film footage of journeys. <http://www.thepowerofsheffieldjourneys.org.uk/>