

According to the Alzheimer's Society, around 900,000 people live with Dementia in the UK, with cases expected to rise to 1.6 million by 2040. There is currently no cure, but there are medications that can help manage symptoms. Moreover, studies have shown that engaging in group activities can boost sufferers' well-being, whilst also giving carers respite. Below is a guide to all the fantastic services for people with Dementia and memory loss living in Harpenden.

Memory Cafes

These meet-ups allow residents with Dementia to get together in a safe, comforting environment and enjoy a piece of cake with their favourite cuppa. As well as socialising, the cafes offer fun activities including sing-alongs, chair exercises and art. Residents are more than welcome to bring a family member, their partner or carer to the meet-up. But if they are coming alone, it can be arranged for a volunteer to pick them up from their home and drop them back.

There are three memory cafes in the local area.

- **Harpenden**
- When: Mondays from 2-3.30pm
- Where: Salvation Army, Leyton Green
- Tel: **01582 460457**
- Email: kenneth.guest@salvationarmy.org.uk

- **Marshalswick**
- When: Wednesday mornings from 10.30-noon
- Where: St Marys Church, the Quadrant
- Tel: **01727 895941**
- Email: Fiona.harrall@homeinstead.co.uk

Wheathampstead

When: the first and third Wednesday morning of the month from 10.30-noon..

Where: Mead Hall, East Lane, Wheathampstead AL4 8BP (Behind the Bull Public House Car Park)

Tel: 07949 630228

Music sessions

According to Dementia UK, listening to or engaging in music- for example through singing, dancing or playing instruments- has a number of benefits for those living with memory problems and Dementia. It can:

- Improve well-being
- Reduce distress
- Act as a prompt for reminiscing
- Help them to express their feelings and connect with loved-ones
- Encourage exercise through dance or movement

- Encourage socialisation

Herts Musical Memories is a wonderful service founded by Kerry Brabant in April 2017. It came about after the Singing for the Brain service, originally provided by the Alzheimer's Society, was due to be discontinued by Herts County Council. An ex Dementia singing leader, Kerry was determined to keep these services going. Personal experience had also shown her the power music can have on mental health.

"My father had Vascular Dementia and towards the end of his illness, he could no longer speak but he could still communicate through singing" she said. "I put on the radio and a song might come on that we both recognised. As I joined in with the music, he lifted his head and we sang together."

Herts Musical Memories run 8 singing groups across Hertfordshire and you don't need to be a great singer to join. Out of tune warblings are most welcome, so long as you're having a laugh. Below are the contact details and nearest locations to Harpenden.

Main tel: **020 895 05757**

St Albans

When: Friday afternoons 2.15-3.45

Where: Homewood Road URC Church

Wheathampstead

When: Most Mondays 10.30-noon

Where: Memorial Hall, 37 Marford Rd, Wheathampstead AL4 8AY

Music for My Mind Charity

Based in Harpenden, this charity works to improve the well-being of people living with Dementia through listening to music. They offer a unique service that helps family members/carers put together a personalised playlist of songs for their loved-one.

Tel: 01582 792833

Email: info@musicformymind.com

Address: River Lodge, West Common, Harpenden, AL5 2JD

Dementia-friendly church service in Harpenden

The High Street Methodist Church invites Dementia sufferers and their loved-ones to a specially tailored service. Each service lasts around 30 minutes and consists of wellknown hymns, followed by refreshments at Wesley's cafe. Unlike most church services, it is very relaxed and attendees are encouraged to stand up, sit down or move around as they wish. Dates can vary so it's worth checking the website for a full calendar. Alternatively you can get in touch through the following means.

Tel: 01582 713056

Email: pastoral@highstreet.church

Address: High Street Methodist Church, Harpenden, AL5 2RU

Activity Clubs

The Kingfisher Dementia Fun Club, organised by the Hertfordshire Independent Living Service, offers fun activities for people living with Dementia, individually or in groups. Staff will work with your loved-one to establish their hobbies and what activities they most enjoy. These activities may include crafts, quizzes, food tasting and poetry reading.

Sessions run Monday to Friday from 10am to 3pm, meaning carers can have respite, and it costs £35 per day which includes activities and a hot lunch with dessert.

Address: Jubilee centre, Catherine St, St Albans, AL3 5BU

Tel: **0330 2000 103**

Community Support

Hertwise provides community Dementia support across Hertfordshire. They offer one-to-one or group sessions with those living with Dementia, memory loss and mild cognitive impairments.

There are also support groups specifically for carers.

Tel: **0300 123 4044**.

Befriending Service

Harpenden Helping Hand is a charity that was founded in 1971. Their volunteers provide help to anyone living in Harpenden who needs a helping hand, whatever their age. This may include befriending; giving someone lifts to hospital appointments; picking up prescriptions; or assisting them with their weekly shop.

Tel: 01582 764 599

Email: coordinator@hhhand.org.uk