

DEEP – “Making an Impact Together” Booklet

Back in March of this year, the Dementia Engagement and Empowerment Project coordinated and facilitated a meeting of representatives from the Peer Support Groups of SURF Liverpool, Educate Stockport and the East Kent Forget Me Nots. We met for a 24 hour seminar at the St Katherine’s Retreat in East London about making an impact in creating better understanding around dementia and how things could be improved in society for those with a diagnosis. As we discussed what the groups did, it became very clear that the groups represented did not just talk the talk, they all walked the walk by taking action. Certainly, although we were meeting at a Retreat, the groups were clearly not in retreat!

Born out of this gathering, it was decided to produce a guidance document to assist other groups to get going and to outline how to succeed and how to avoid the pitfalls. A lot of ideas were discussed in, if you will excuse the phrase, the brain storming sessions. Follow-up meetings were arranged with Philly Hare from DEEP and she made a number of visits to groups, collecting and collating a wealth of suggestions to add to those already given. This excellent document, “Making an Impact Together”, which is illustrated superbly by Michael Young who is the partner of one of the Forget Me Nots, is the end result. Every one of the 60 pages contains a golden nugget of information and advice. It encompasses ideas from the length and breadth of the UK, from Scotland right down to Cornwall. It is a brilliant tool to empower groups to get the voice of those with dementia heard by covering such subjects as making allies and getting noticed, working together effectively, changing the public understanding of dementia and improving the environment for those with dementia.

Dementia comes in CANS. With the aid of this outstanding booklet, Groups Can succeed, CAN make a difference and CAN get the important changes made for those Living with Dementia.