Introduction

Dementia Action Week (previously Dementia Awareness week) is a key opportunity for libraries to highlight the services and support they offer. It provides the chance to showcase library services to people with dementia and their carers, including Reading Well for dementia.

Dementia Action Week takes place between 21 and 27 May and is an Alzheimer’s Society initiative. You may find the Public Library Dementia Offer a useful guide when thinking about relevant services and support.

This toolkit provides ideas for displays, events and activities that will help to tie in the dementia services in public libraries, including Reading Well, with the campaigns the respective charities are running.

This year, Alzheimer’s Society has shifted the focus from awareness to action, asking people to unite and take actions big and small to make change happen for people affected by dementia. See their website for more information.

About Reading Well for dementia

Reading Well for dementia recommends helpful reading for people with dementia and their carers. The books include information and advice, help after diagnosis, practical support for carers and personal stories. You can find information and resources for Reading Well for dementia on the Reading Well website.
Ideas for activities at your library

Displays

- Create a prominently positioned display of Reading Well titles. User leaflets and posters are still available to order from The Reading Agency shop. You might want to print out images, make bunting, or get creative in the way you put your display together to make sure it catches visitors’ eyes.
- You could include Quick Reads titles in your display, as they have proven popular with people with dementia who have difficulty with longer books.
- Display the titles on a table, or on a dump bin, where they’re easy to pick up. Try to provide a place for people to sit down and look through the titles. You might want to display copies of the Overview of the titles nearby, so people can see a blurb about each book and decide which one they’d like to borrow.
- Create a space on a wall or a table where people can leave comments about the book list, and share this with your local health partners.
- Invite local organisations to provide leaflets and information to be displayed alongside the Reading Well display, and ask if they’re happy to share and display Reading Well leaflets in return.
- Order free copies of Alzheimer’s Society’s Dementia Guide and Memory Handbook to display alongside the Reading Well titles.
- Download Alzheimer’s Society posters, flyers and booklets and display them in your library. These Easy Read factsheets may also be helpful: What is dementia? and Supporting a person with dementia.

Events and activities

Here are some ideas of events and activities you could hold:

- Invite local organisations (such as Alzheimer’s Society) to provide a learning session on dementia, and advertise it around the library during the run up to the event.
- Run reminiscence sessions using memory boxes/reminiscence packs containing objects, photographs, poetry, music, books and smells, perhaps collected around a specific theme. For inspiration, here are some more reminiscence activity ideas:
  - Southwark libraries have held practical sessions on how to use RemArc, a new reminiscence website that uses BBC archive material to trigger memories.
  - Salford libraries hold popular monthly ‘Sporting Memories’ sessions aimed at people with dementia and their carers in particular, using The Sporting Memories Foundation resources.
  - Stockton libraries have a local history group specifically for people with dementia that uses iPads to view and discuss images of local history.
  - Coventry libraries have held creative collaging sessions, where people with dementia and their carers use materials like photos and mementos to create personal, memory-triggering collages.
• Visit a local dementia care home, and share dementia friendly titles such as the *Pictures to Share* collection with the residents and staff. Many libraries also loan their Reminiscence Packs to care homes as well as to groups and individuals.

• Encourage staff to read the Reading Well for dementia titles and pick up facts to share on social media and around the library. Staff could wear Dementia Action Week badges with key facts and information about the scheme.

• If you have any reading groups in your library, you could encourage them to read one of the Reading Well for dementia titles. They can share their reviews of the books on the Reading Well website: [www.reading-well.org.uk](http://www.reading-well.org.uk)

• You could organise staff training around dementia through organisations such as [Innovations in Dementia](https://www.innovationsindementia.org.uk)

• Encourage staff members and library visitors to sign up to be Dementia Friends. They can either do this by attending a training session delivered by Dementia Champions, or by registering and watching a training video on the Dementia Friends website: [www.dementiafriends.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriends.org.uk). This is part of wider Alzheimer’s Society initiative [Dementia Friendly Communities](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/dementia-friendly-communities), which provides resources and opportunities for making organisations more dementia friendly.

### Digital resources

You can find a wide range of digital resources to help you deliver Reading Well for dementia on The Reading Agency website.

#### Resources

Here you’ll find a range of resources to help you make the most of the Reading Well programme, whether you’re a reader, health professional or member of library staff.

- **Readers**
- **Health professionals**
- **Library staff**

The resources include:

• An [image bank](http://www.example.com) of photos showing people using the leaflets, the books and their local library

• [Plasma screen artwork](http://www.example.com) to display in the library, and also to share with local health partners to display during Dementia Action Week in their surgeries to encourage people to come to the library

• A guide to making the [most of your book](http://www.example.com) which you can make available for people borrowing dementia titles during your promotion

• The [Reading Well logos](http://www.example.com) can be downloaded to share with partners and to put on any promotional material for events or activities you’re planning

• An [overview of the titles](http://www.example.com) to give people more information about each of the individual titles and whether they might be suited to them
You could also signpost from your library website to organisations providing support for people with dementia and their carers:

- Alzheimer’s Society: [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)
- Dementia UK: [www.dementiauk.org](http://www.dementiauk.org)
- Carers UK: [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)
- Carers Trust: [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)
- Dementia Friends: [www.dementiafriends.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriends.org.uk)
- Age UK: [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

**Social Media**

We’d love to see what you’re up to during the week; share your photos, stories and information about activities using:

#DAW2018 and #ReadingWell

Feel free to write your own tweets during the week, but here are some you can use or adapt if you’d prefer:

- Join us for our #ReadingWell dementia event to mark Dementia Action Week #DAW2018 [+link]
- Explore your local library this Dementia Action Week. Discover our collection of #ReadingWell dementia books [http://ow.ly/MkGFa](http://ow.ly/MkGFa) #DAW2018

**The need**

Below are some key facts to use for displays and events:

**Dementia Action Week:**

- There are **850,000** people in the UK living with dementia
- At least **42,000** people below 65 live with the condition – this is called early-onset or young-onset dementia
- Two thirds of people with dementia live in the community, **one third in their own homes**
- Only **48%** of people with dementia have a diagnosis or are in contact with relevant services
- There are over half a million people caring for someone with dementia in England and **1 in 3** can expect to care for someone with the condition in their lifetime.

**On the horizon**

The Reading Agency is currently in the test stages for **Reading Friends**, a new UK-wide befriending project which aims to empower, engage and connect older people who are vulnerable and isolated, people with dementia and carers by starting conversations through reading. It is currently being tested in 6 sites across the UK, with a pilot launch planned for October 2018. You can find out more information about the new scheme on our [website](http://www.readingagency.org.uk).