



# Getting the Messages

## Dementia Inclusive Shopping



Comhairle Cathrach  
Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Dublin City Council



THE ALZHEIMER  
SOCIETY of IRELAND

dementia  
under stand together

SuperValu  
Real Food, Real People



## Pilot Project – Report

(Report Completed: October 2019)

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Getting the Messages was a pilot project designed to support those living with dementia and their carers by making it easier for them to shop and do business in their local communities. It was created following stakeholder consultation which highlighted the role that local businesses could play in supporting those impacted by dementia. The project was supported by Dublin City Council (DCC), The Alzheimer Society of Ireland (ASI), Dementia: Understand Together and SuperValu.

The pilot project commenced with a launch event in Supervalu Raheny on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and continued on Wednesday afternoons from September 2018 until June 2019. Supervalu staff were trained and during each Wednesday afternoon, additional supports were provided and displays were used to create a more inclusive and dementia friendly environment for local shoppers affected by dementia and their carers.

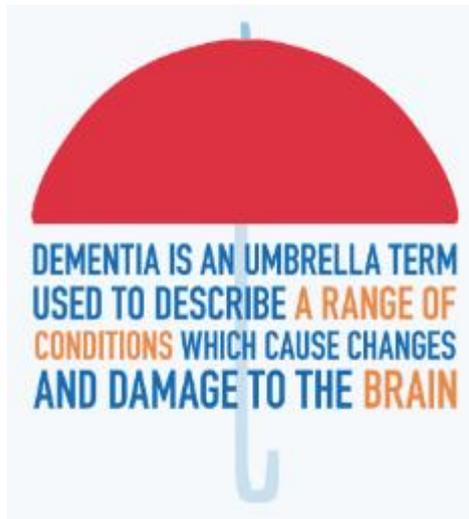
This report provides an overview and insights regarding the project as well as recommendations for initiating this project or similar projects.

## CONTACT DETAILS

This report was completed by the Economic Development Office – Dublin City Council. For queries or further information regarding this report or the initiative, please contact:

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## CONTEXT



Dementia is the name used for a range of progressive conditions that cause damage to the brain which can affect: memory; thinking, language and the ability to perform everyday tasks.

In Ireland, it is estimated that there are currently 55,000 people living with dementia. This figure is forecast to double over the next 20 years to 113,000 as each year over 4,000 people develop dementia.

The majority of people with dementia (63%) live at home in their community and are supported by over 180,000 current or previous carers who support a family member or partner with dementia.

Dementia is a social as well as a health issue that requires a community response<sup>1 2</sup>.

(Source: The Alzheimer Society of Ireland)

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

In her work as a local Councillor engaging with local communities and individuals, Cllr. Deirdre Heney (Previous Chair of the Economic Development and Enterprise – Strategic Policy Committee, Dublin City Council) became increasingly aware of carers and people living with dementia and how day-to-day tasks such as shopping and doing business often presented challenges.

Cllr. Heney met with Economic Development Office (EDO) staff to discuss how local businesses could better serve those affected by dementia and their carers and how they could be assisted to do so by Dublin City Council (DCC). A stakeholder and design workshop was then hosted in November 2017 by the EDO and facilitated by the Institute of Designers in Ireland<sup>3</sup> to consider the challenges and opportunities regarding dementia and how local businesses could be involved.



<sup>1</sup> Dementia Facts & Figures <https://alzheimer.ie/creating-change/awareness-raising/dementia-in-the-media/>

<sup>2</sup> Prevalence & Projections of Dementia in Ireland, 2011 – 2046 [https://www.genio.ie/system/files/publications/Dementia Prevalence 2011 2046.pdf](https://www.genio.ie/system/files/publications/Dementia%20Prevalence%202011%202046.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Institute of Designers in Ireland <http://www.idi-design.ie/>

Stakeholder representatives and participants at the workshop included: carers, local businesses, interest groups, community organisations, designers, planners, councillors, DCC staff and representatives from The Alzheimer Society of Ireland. Numerous insights and ideas were highlighted at the workshop which are captured in the: IDI Report: Caring for Dementia Workshop. Some of the high level insights / quotes from the workshop include:

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‘Caring for a loved one with dementia can be a full time job with little support from the outside world. It can be lonely and frustrating, a world that few of us can fathom unless we experience it. Everyday activities like shopping, dressing, and eating can take far longer. Carers need moments of relief and respite.

‘Fear of falls, malnutrition, confusion and more risks to those with dementia are a constant weight on the shoulders of carers. Reassurance that their loved one is safe is vital, it relieves anxiety but requires huge trust in the person or object they are relying on to monitor their loved one. “Our hairdresser is great, she knows mam and her condition and can ring if anything goes wrong”. This mixture of understanding and compassion from a business makes one of many monthly activities all the easier.

‘Awareness around Dementia is a huge tool in improving the lives of carers and their loved one. The more people know, the more they can empathise and support. Awareness is knowing that a dishevelled looking person at the till who seems confused, could be suffering from Dementia and need assistance, rather than they are “strange”. Knowing more helps remove stigma and get people thinking about something that will be increasingly prevalent.

‘A town, village, or community can do a huge amount to help or hinder the quality of life for those with Dementia, and their carers. Everything from signage, lighting, acoustics, staff attitude, training and awareness, colours, user interfaces, font size, and many factors can help.

How might we encourage towns and businesses to become agents of positive change, through technological or community based action?’ How might we use technology, communities, towns and businesses to increase the public’s awareness and empathy towards dementia?’ How might we use technology, local businesses, communities to provide carers with the reassurance that their loved one is safe when at home, or out and about, affording each of them increased freedom and quality of life?’

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After the workshop a stakeholder working group was established with representatives from: DCC; ASI; Dementia Carers; Local Business. A series of meetings took place during Qtr. 1, 2018 at which shortlisted action areas and ideas from the workshop were discussed and investigated. The 3 main shortlisted action areas were:

1. Retail Experience	2. Technology	3. Café Initiative
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It was ultimately agreed to focus on retail experience in a pilot scheme and to support local businesses to become more inclusive and better equipped to serve those with dementia and their carers. The scheme thus involved developing supports for local businesses such as:

- Staff training (Led by The Alzheimer Society of Ireland, HSE & Dementia: Understand Together)
- Awareness & resources (Led by The Alzheimer Society of Ireland & Dublin City Council)
- Marketing material (Led by Dublin City Council)



Graphic Designer Una Healy<sup>4</sup> was commissioned by DCC to create a name, logo and other marketing materials for the initiative. The initiative was called ‘Getting the Messages’ (GTM) in reference to the expression used to do some shopping. The logo is comprised of two hands joined together to form a shopping basket. The fingers are interwoven reminiscent of the weave of an old shopping basket with one hand portrayed as that of a person with dementia and the other as the hand of the wider community. The hands are joined together to create a unified, assisted and enjoyable shopping experience. The logo colours are high contrast and based on the colours of the Forget-me-not flower using strong saturation.

In recognition of the innovative GTM design work, Una Healy was awarded the IDI Universal Design Award 2018<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Una Healy Design <https://www.unahealydesign.com/>

<sup>5</sup> IDI Universal Design Awards 2018 Winner <http://universaldesign.ie/Awards/IDI-Design-Awards/>

## GETTING THE MESSAGES - LAUNCH EVENT



Raheny was selected as a pilot village and SuperValu Raheny was invited as a local business to participate and pilot a dementia inclusive retail initiative. The initiative was launched during Alzheimer Awareness Month, an international campaign to raise awareness and challenge the stigma surrounding dementia. A special launch event was hosted at SuperValu Raheny on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019. At the event: The Forget Me Nots Choir<sup>6</sup> (an inclusive community choir for older people, family, friends and those affected by dementia) performed and Cllr. Heney spoke about the Getting the Messages initiative before officially launching it with representatives from SuperValu Raheny. Local community stakeholders and individuals attended along with representatives from The Alzheimer Society of Ireland and Dublin City Council.

The launch event was reported on in local newspapers including The Northside People; The Irish Catholic and was featured as a press release on the DCC and the Alzheimer Society of Ireland websites. The event also attracted significant attention on social media with accounts from SuperValu; DCC; The Alzheimer Society of Ireland and local stakeholders posting about the launch event. (Examples can be seen below in Appendix 2).



<sup>6</sup> The Forget Me Nots Choir <http://forgetmenots.ie/>

**Getting the Messages**  
Dementia Inclusive Shopping

**Come along and shop in our safe and supported environment**

Starting Wednesday 26th September 2pm - 4.30pm  
Raheny SuperValu Store

**Getting the Messages**  
Dementia Inclusive Shopping

**Need help?**  
Ask a member of our staff. They will be wearing this badge.

They can advise on:

- Finding Products
- Seating Locations
- Toilet Facilities
- First Aid

This initiative is brought to you by

This initiative is brought to you by

As part of the pilot initiative at SuperValu, the following supports & activities were implemented / conducted:

- Marketing. Banners and posters such as those above were placed around the SuperValu to create and build awareness. Staff were also given 'Getting the Messages' badges and T-shirts to wear during the initiative.
- Training. Eight core staff and management were trained by a representative from ASI/HSE at one of two sessions. Training involved a 2 hour session on supporting someone with dementia and was presented in a train-the-trainer format equipping those trained to be project champions and train other staff.
- Resources. Staff were given dementia resources highlighting tips on how to interact with a person who has dementia. These resources and posters were displayed and made available in the staff room.
- Facilities. Various facilities such as additional seating, first aid, toilet and customer service were enhanced or made available during the allotted times each week.
- Signage. Additional signage was placed in the SuperValu to guide shoppers regarding the facilities and assistance needed. Examples of the signs can be seen below.

**Getting the Messages**  
Dementia Inclusive Shopping

- Need to rest?**  
Sit here
- Need First Aid?**  
Right here
- Need toilet facilities?**  
Over here
- Can't find a Product?**  
Ask here

According to the Store Manager John Gaffney: although the pilot project formally ended in June 2019, SuperValu are continuing to provide the service associated with the programme. He stated that it was not clear if the initiative brought about a rise in profits, however he emphasised that being involved was very positive regarding staff, customers and local community engagement. Regarding the initiative, he stated that it presented:

**'A great opportunity to provide assistance and give back to the community'**

## CONCLUSION

The pilot project represents a collaborative community and economic development focused initiative. Although it has ended, SuperValu Raheny are continuing to provide the services associated with the initiative. From the perspective of key stakeholders; the project aligned with their remit & brought about the following key benefits:

- SuperValu Raheny: As part of their commitment to provide unrivalled customer service and serve the local community, the initiative provided an opportunity to engage with and assist local people affected by Dementia as well as providing a Dementia inclusive shopping experience.

Key benefits: Public relations / promotion opportunities; staff training / upskilling; staff motivation; corporate social responsibility profiling and local community engagement.

- Dublin City Council: As part of DCC's role to support local economic and community development and social inclusion at policy and operation levels, the project demonstrates an example and case study of local collaboration and tangible support provided by the Economic Development Office.

Key benefits: Contribution to and achievement of local economic and community development; stakeholder engagement; public relations / promotion opportunities.

- The Alzheimer Society of Ireland: As part of the ASI role to support local communities & provide dementia services & supports, the project represents an example of local dementia training and awareness raising.

Key benefits: Contribution to and achievement of local economic and community development; awareness raising; opportunity for training provision; stakeholder engagement; promotion opportunities.

- Dementia Understand Together: As part of the campaigns role to raise awareness and public support, the project provided a tangible way to increase local awareness and provide staff training.

Key benefits: Campaign & general dementia awareness raising; promotion opportunities; training provision

- Local Dementia Carers: From feedback and consultations after the launch, carer representatives were delighted to see an example of local awareness raising and support for those living with dementia.

Key benefits: Local support; increased awareness.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

As part of evaluating the project, an end of pilot project consultation was hosted in SuperValu Raheny with key stakeholders to obtain further feedback, ideas and recommendations to develop the initiative or similar initiatives in future. Ideas and recommendations are provided below:

- Training. Dementia awareness training could take place as part of general induction / staff training when a new member of staff commences their role. Staff training can be provided via group meetings at a business location or online. Specific information about staff training for: transport, retail and financial service staff is available at: <https://www.understandtogether.ie/training-resources/dementia-training-and-education/training-for-business-and-service-providers/>

- Awareness. As part of further enhancing local dementia awareness, an initiative could be developed where local businesses or a business network implements a regular dementia inclusive afternoon / day in their village or area to highlight businesses that are dementia inclusive and dementia awareness trained.

The Getting the Messages – design work, resources and materials can be used by local businesses or networks for events and initiatives and are available from the Economic Development Office, DCC.

Dementia awareness campaign material and resources are also available at: [www.Understandtogether.ie](http://www.Understandtogether.ie)

- Operations: Installing dementia awareness campaign signs at trolley bays and / or checkouts could act as effective reminders that the business is dementia inclusive and aware all the time, not just during a specific afternoon or session. Signs, cards etc. could also be used to encourage customers to inform businesses if they or a loved one is living with dementia so businesses can be aware and more supportive.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

For local businesses, community groups and others interested in implementing the Getting the Messages initiative or similar initiatives, the below links and information provide various resources:



Getting the Messages is an initiative which supports those living with or affected by Dementia by making it easier for them to shop and do business in their local communities. It involves providing additional supports and encouraging staff awareness so that participating businesses can better assist people with Dementia and their carers to shop locally.

This initiative is brought to you by



As well as the resources created specifically for SuperValu, generic GTM resources were created and are available from the Economic Development Office DCC for use by local businesses or networks. Signage, leaflets, resources and other design work are available. Contact the office via:

Economic Development Office, Dublin City Council,  
3 Palace Street, Dublin 2, D02 T277

(Ph): 01 222 5611 (Web): [www.dublincity.ie](http://www.dublincity.ie)

(E): [economicdevelopment@dublincity.ie](mailto:economicdevelopment@dublincity.ie)



Dementia: [www.UnderstandTogether.ie](http://www.UnderstandTogether.ie) is a public support, awareness and stigma reduction campaign, led by the HSE in partnership with the ASI, Genio and a coalition of 40+ business, academic, health and voluntary & community sector partners. The campaign aims to raise dementia awareness to inspire people to take actions to create dementia inclusive communities and provides extensive resources, information and training for businesses & community groups.

For information on the campaign or organising a local initiative, contact Fiona Foley (E): [Fiona.Foley1@hse.ie](mailto:Fiona.Foley1@hse.ie)



# The 6 Tips you can use when interacting with a person with Dementia



**1.**

## Speak Clearly

Use short simple sentences allowing the person time to understand and respond.



**2.**

## Body Language

Smile warmly, make eye contact, use a friendly tone and respect their personal space.



**3.**

## Listen Carefully

Listen carefully to what the person is saying, giving plenty of reassurance that you understand what it is they need.



**4.**

## Limit Choices

While choice is good, for a person with dementia, too much choice can be confusing. Keep choices to a minimum and if necessary describe the options available to them.



**5.**

## Handling Money

For a person with dementia counting money, recognising and knowing the value of money may be difficult. Give them extra time to complete the transaction and always provide a receipt.



**6.**

## The Environment

A noisy environment in stores can cause a person with dementia unnecessary confusion. If you notice someone looking lost or distressed, offer to give them assistance.



# Dementia-friendly shopping project is launched in Raheny

A PILOT project designed to support those living with dementia and their carers by making it easier for them to shop and do business in their local community has been launched in Raheny.

The 'Getting the Messages' initiative involves staff training and additional supports such as signage, appropriate displays and seating to create a dementia-inclusive environment.

Launching the scheme in SuperValu Raheny last week, Cllr Deirdre Heney (FF) said: "Through my work engaging with my local community, I became very aware of carers of loved ones living with dementia and how day-to-day tasks such as shopping and doing business present serious challenges. We then held a workshop to learn more about these challenges and explore how local businesses

could create dementia-inclusive experiences and environments."

SuperValu Raheny was the business chosen for the pilot project. Every Wednesday, they will have supports and appropriate facilities available to enable shoppers living with dementia and their carers to have a positive and inclusive experience.

Tina Leonard, Head of Advocacy and Public Affairs at the Alzheimer Society of Ireland, commented: "We are delighted to support Dublin City Council and SuperValu Raheny with this initiative. Creating awareness and improving inclusion are vital to overcome the daily challenges facing those living with dementia and their carers in local communities.

"The project involves local businesses implementing simple yet effective practices which



Pictured at the launch are Forget Me Not Choir members Mary and Loretta O'Leary, Audrey Carney and Cllr Deirdre Heney. PHOTOS: FENNEL PHOTOGRAPHY



Pictured at the launch of 'Getting the Messages' at SuperValu Raheny were Cllr Deirdre Heney and store manager David Brennan.

benefit both those living with dementia and local businesses in that they can better serve this important

segment of consumers." The project is sponsored by Dublin City Council in collaboration with

the Alzheimer Society of Ireland. The Alzheimer Society of Ireland helpline is open

six days a week, Monday to Friday, 10am-5pm and Saturday, 10am-4pm, on 1800 341 341.



**AlzheimerSocirel**  
@alzheimersocirel

Follow

Caroline Cullen from @SuperValuRaheny puts the dementia inclusive sticker on the door. Spot those posters in store too. @DeirdreHeney @DubCityCouncil @unahealydesign Thanks and good luck!



**LEODublinCity**  
@LEODublinCity

Getting the messages - Dementia Inclusive Shopping is now officially launched @SuperValuIRL Raheny by @DeirdreHeney Fantastic to have Forget Me Not choir here today @SuperValuRaheny providing beautiful singing. #Dementia #Alzheimers #AlzheimersAwarenessMonth



**@makinghay**  
@MakingHayKaren

Follow

Thank you @SuperValuRaheny for being the first shop in Dublin to host a dementia-inclusive shopping event! Well done @DeirdreHeney and @DubCityCouncil @SuperValuIRL @FMNchoir @alzheimersocirel @RahenyBusiness @letstalkdement1 @EngagingDemIrl @unahealydesign



**AlzheimerSocirel**  
@alzheimersocirel

Follow

Sunshine and community spirit as @DeirdreHeney launches Dementia Inclusive Shopping @SuperValuRaheny today #UnderstandTogether

