



The Meeting Centres UK Newsletter

March 2023

Welcome to the March 2023 newsletter!

It's been a period of change for the Meeting Centres project here at the University of Worcester as our National Lottery funding came to an end in February. We are most grateful to the Shaw Foundation which is supporting our work over the coming year. We remain committed to supporting Meeting Centres across the UK, and beyond, and are delighted that we can continue business as usual.

For this newsletter we've got our usual mix of items to tell you about, but we've also decided to open it up to you to get your stories out to a wider audience. If you missed your opportunity, don't worry, you can always send us something to add into our June newsletter!

Best wishes.

Dr Shirley Evans

**Interim Director of the
Association for Dementia
Studies**



Planned changes to the Meeting Centre blog site

Following feedback, we've decided to remove the discussion forum element from our blog site. It wasn't working as intended, so we're going to focus on providing useful information and resources in a more accessible way. You might notice a few changes taking place, but hopefully they'll be for the better!

Meeting Centre training

Our online training is continuing, with the next cohort due to start in early April. We're pleased to say that there will be three further courses running in 2024 in April, July and November, and we've also got a few other plans in progress so watch out for any announcements.

So, if you're a Meeting Centre member of staff or volunteer please have a look at our website for more details on how you can attend the training for free. You can also see the dates of future courses [here](#).

If you've been on the training, don't forget that you are eligible to apply for the [Hennell Award](#) – don't be shy about what you're achieving!

Get Real event – save the date!

Many of you will be aware of – and involved with – the 'Get Real with Meeting Centres' research project that we've been running for the past couple of years.



The project has been focusing on sustainability by looking at the different factors that can help a Meeting Centre to keep going.

The project is just coming to an end, and we're pleased to announce that we are hosting a celebration event to present our findings and discuss how they might inform next steps for Meeting Centres in the UK.

We will also be unveiling our new information booklets containing our findings and premiering new informative videos that have been produced as part of this project.

Save the date

12th July 2023

**University of Worcester Arena
Worcester**

You can book a free place to attend using this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/559539386367>

Data collection forms

As our National Lottery funding has ended, we've had to update our data collection forms to reflect this. The actual data collection process hasn't changed, but some of the information sheet has had to be altered and we've removed the National Lottery logos.

We've tried to future-proof the forms, so there will be no further changes required (fingers crossed!). The new forms should have been sent to all Meeting Centres, with a request to start using them from March onwards.

To find out more about data collection or to download the new forms [see our blog site](#).

Worcestershire Meeting Centre videos

Thanks to funding from Worcestershire County Council, two short videos have been created to help promote Meeting Centres by explaining what they are and give a feel for what goes on.

A local film maker worked with Meeting Centres across Worcestershire, resulting in short videos for two different audiences:

- [Members and carers](#)
- [Referrers](#)

Please feel free to use these videos to help promote your own Meeting Centres – share away!

The Dementia Care Hub – Meeting Centre Totton



The Dementia Care Hub offers a social group each Monday for all people affected by dementia. It was founded by Dr Kellyn Lee, a BPS Chartered Psychologist with a special interest in dementia care who spent over a decade in ageing and dementia research. The Monday group continues to go from strength to strength with around 40 people attending each week and 11 volunteers. Our youngest member is 4 years old, our oldest is 92 and we have Bella the therapy dog.

Kellyn developed the 'We Care Dementia Care programme', which is a 7-week course for care partners, running alongside the Monday group. The course introduces care partners to the benefits of mindfulness and provides an opportunity to explore their thoughts and feelings around the relationship changes dementia brings, what that looks like now and what they might need in relation to support for them to live as well as possible, given the circumstances.

At the request of care partners, Kellyn set up a weekly Wednesday group, this time for people living with a dementia to enjoy social time independently from their care partners. This group is overseen by Kellyn but run by a Centre Manager, two Wellbeing Facilitators and volunteers.

The Dementia Care Hub became Totton Meeting Centre in January 2023. We have been running for 2 months and are at capacity. In April we will pilot an art class for people living with a dementia and their care partners. We are also exploring collaborations with care organisations who are keen to work together and run groups from their settings. We will keep you posted on any new developments!



Bristol Meeting Centre – Flipping brilliant!

There has been lots of concentration and lively competition at our recent pancake tossing tournament!

Our very skilled 'flippers' went head-to-head to see who could complete the greatest number of 'flips' inside a minute! It was enormous fun and not only encouraged movement, but also supported strength, balance, and co-ordination.

After working up an appetite, our members helped to prepare fillings for a pancake-themed lunch, which we all enjoyed together.

(The Association for Dementia Studies was pleased to be able to visit Bristol Meeting Centre and South Gloucestershire Meeting Centre, and you can read about that visit in [one of our blogs](#))



Creative event in Fife

This event is the culmination of all our creative work carried out in the Meeting Centre spaces in Kennoway, Kirkcaldy and Kinghorn in Fife.

It will showcase the original songs we have written and the creative writing we have produced. We'll also have memory boxes on display and some artwork.

We are being supported in the event by the St Marie's Primary School choir who are based in Kirkcaldy. We are creating a dementia friendly choir with STAND members joining them.

We may be able to film/stream the event. We are working on that possibility at the moment and will let you know if that can happen.

Eventbrite link:

<https://STANDCreativeExpo.eventbrite.co.uk>

Family blanket madness!

Keep an eye out for information about a slightly crazy idea we've had to celebrate being part of the Meeting Centres UK family – we're hoping to create a blanket! We want to get Meeting Centres across the UK involved and will send out more information in due course.

Web: <https://www.worcester.ac.uk/discover/uk-meeting-centres-support-programme.html>

Email: meetingcentres@worc.ac.uk

Twitter: @MeetingCentres

Mailing list: https://ext-webapp-01.worc.ac.uk/meeting_centres_mailing_list/subscribe

Blog: <https://meetingcentres.org/>
(Useful resources <https://meetingcentres.org/useful-resources/>
data collection <https://meetingcentres.org/data-collection/>)

