



The UK Meeting Centres Support Programme Newsletter

July 2020

Welcome to our Summer 2020 newsletter!

The UK Meeting Centre Support Programme has certainly not been quiet since the start of the recent pandemic. Meeting Centres have rapidly needed to find innovative ways to support those isolated at home during the pandemic.

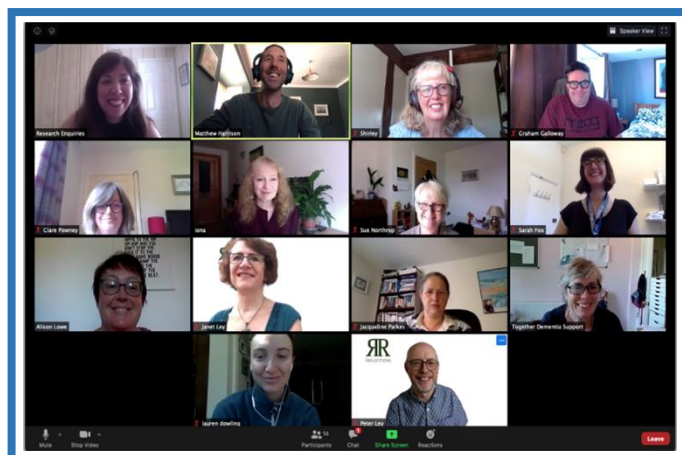
New approaches include music and arts activity packs, regular telephone calls, weekly newsletters and the use of technology such as Zoom, FaceTime and WhatsApp for 1-2-1, 2-2-1 and group/carer session support and activities. A really effective blend of technology enabled and traditional methods of communication and support.

As I write lockdown and physical distancing rules are being relaxed and this brings with it a number of challenges to keep members, family carers, staff and volunteers safe. Our Community of Learning and Practice has been sharing resources, knowledge and expertise and helping each other to find their way through this this challenging time.

Thank you for your continued support and interest in Meeting Centres.

Wishing you an enjoyable summer – stay safe.

**Director of the Association for Dementia
Studies**



Online Community Makers

Meeting Centre Managers and a number of people involved with implementing new online Meeting Centres, which we are calling Online Meeting Points, have been meeting since lockdown on a weekly basis. This has been invaluable in terms of sharing learning and practice.

Aligned to this we were invited to participate in an initiative called Community Makers (see image above). This project is led by a collaborative team from Alzheimer's Society, the Helix Centre at Imperial College London (working as part of the UK Dementia Institute Care Research and Technology Centre) and supported by UK MCSP.

The Community Makers network is a group of people with experience or interest in setting up online communities and groups for people affected by dementia (may be people with a diagnosis, carers or relatives). This network allows people to guide the development of the project and share knowledge with each other. We arrange online meetings and support an online forum where people can share challenges and ideas. The network is informing the development of a toolkit to help others set up online communities.

If you are interested in getting involved with Community Makers and/or finding out more about the UK Meeting Centres Support Programme, please contact:

**Shirley Evans, Programme Manager,
meetingcentres@worc.ac.uk**

Strategic Thinking: The Shaw Foundation

The Shaw Foundation

<http://www.shawfoundation.org.uk/index.php> has generously committed to providing matched funding for 3-year PhD studentship at Worcester commencing in February 2021. The topic is on 'The impact of a strategic regional approach to scaling up Meeting Centres for people affected by dementia'. The advertisement for this will go out early September 2020.

The Shaw Foundation is also funding two Meeting Centre Project Development Management posts for Liverpool (city and metropolitan borough) and Bristol (county and city) to set up several Meeting Centres in each location. The Foundation has also part funded a project officer post in Herefordshire to help take forward community-based initiatives including Meeting Centres.

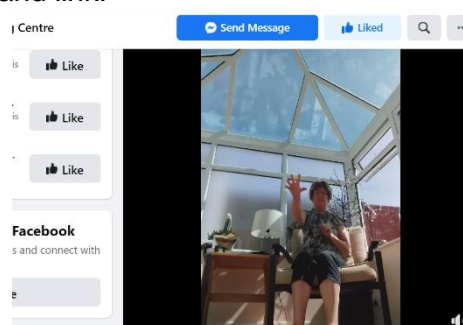
Worcestershire Meeting Centres

Many of you will already know that Worcester County Council, via the county's 75% Business Rates pilot, is providing funding to pump prime the establishment of nine Meeting Centres. The start of the project was postponed by six months due to the pandemic, but it is all systems go for applications to open within the next month or so. Funding will be available from December 2020.

Monthly Webinars

Our monthly webinars have been successful over the last few months. These are informal presentations/talks and a chance to share practice and ask questions. They take place on the last Friday of every month at 12.30 pm.

The webinars are listed on our website [UK MCSP](http://www.worcestercouncil.gov.uk) <http://bit.ly/38KCCJ5> with links to the webinars and information about how to access them via Go To Meeting. Use the link above to sign up to our mailing list and to find out the topic and link.



Online seated exercise videos on Facebook – the new 'normal'

Dates to look out for

National Reference Group meeting postponed from May 4th 2020 to November 26th 2020

National Conference postponed from May 5th 2020 to be rescheduled as online events in Jan/Feb 2021

PhD Studentship to be advertised early Sept 2020

Online 'Adjusting to Change' training to be launched Autumn 2020

For further information and/or to contact us for support, please visit:

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

Email: meetingcentres@worc.ac.uk

Blog: <https://meetingcentres.wordpress.com/> and useful resources <https://meetingcentres.wordpress.com/useful-resources/>

Twitter: @MeetingCentres

