



Dementia Toolkit – Stay active

How to find dementia-accessible exercise options



Dementia Toolkit
Living your life with hope



Stay active

How to find dementia-accessible exercise options

Some people have found it difficult to find exercise classes or activities which are available to people with dementia. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it became clear how much people value these sorts of activities, especially when they stopped.

In this booklet we give you some pointers for how to find options near you by discussing:

- keywords
- where to look
- real-life examples



We used to go to table-tennis club every week, which was as much a social gathering as it was exercise.

We used to go for a tea dance on a Friday. That was nice as well. It was like a party every Friday.

If activities had started again, that would have helped.

People affected by dementia talking to our researchers about activities they enjoyed before COVID-19 restrictions





Keywords

While 'dementia' is an obvious keyword when looking for a dementia-accessible exercise class, it is not the only word you can try.

- **accessible** – this more generic term may bring up unexpected options which you might otherwise miss (such as the 'accessible cycling' example below)
- **inclusive** – for the same reasons as 'accessible'
- **brain health** – sometimes exercise is advertised using this phrase
- **dementia-friendly** – though perhaps not dementia specific, this word would assure you that the people running the activity or class have thought about how to adapt it for people living with dementia

Remember, too, that there may be sports or types of exercise you have never heard of! Have you come across **boccia**? It's a target ball sport played from a seated position. What about **cage cricket**? Or **walking football**? Perhaps knowing what is available elsewhere will help you campaign for provision nearer to you.

Where to look

Dementia Friends (run by Alzheimer's Society) is a national initiative to change perceptions of dementia and get people and organisations involved in being dementia friendly. Their website is a good place to go to for advice about your local dementia friendly community. You can also find a list of what may be available near you.

Visit: <https://bit.ly/DemFriendlyCommunities>

Age UK have a local directory you can search online to find exercise classes near you. This is great if you want to get more active but don't know where to start.

Visit: <https://bit.ly/GettingActiveAgeUK>

Care Choices currently have comprehensive guides for four areas in the UK: Hampshire, Leicestershire, Norfolk and Northamptonshire. These downloadable guides have local information about where to get help with things from transport to holiday and respite cover, as well as activity listings.

You can view and download these guides on their website:

<https://www.carechoices.co.uk/publication-type/dementia-guides/>

Alternatively you can call **01223 207770** to request a free printed guide.

While not everywhere has a handy dementia guide, many local authorities have directories of care and support services, activities and information linked from council websites.

Local leisure centres and community centres are also worth checking to see what's available.

Real-life examples

Dementia Adventure run various events for people affected by dementia. They run supported and group holidays. However, if you live in Essex, you could book to join them on a supported day out for a walk in the great outdoors. You can find out more on their website.

Visit **<https://dementiaadventure.co.uk>**

Alternatively, you can call them on **01245 237548** from 9am – 5:30pm Monday to Friday.



Cycling is a great way to get about, to socialise and to stay active.

There are now modified bicycles make cycling accessible to many more people. There are lots of places offering 'accessible cycling' and some offer adapted bicycles. One place offering this is Pedall in the New Forest. To find out more visit <https://www.pedall.org.uk>

Cage Cricket is an accessible version of cricket with a portable set of equipment so it can be played in different venues. Dementia Friendly Hampshire has been running Cage Cricket sessions. To find out more visit: <https://dementiafriendlyhampshire.org.uk/accessible-cage-cricket/>

If you want to set up your own dementia-friendly physical activities, **Alzheimer's Society** provide a downloadable guide for individuals and organisations. It highlights how they can better support people affected by dementia to participate in their local community activities.

To view the guide visit: <https://bit.ly/AlzSocSport>

If you are unable to get out, you can still stay active. Take a look at our **Exercise at home** booklet for suggestions and options.



This resource is on the internet. Use the camera on your phone or tablet to scan the QR code below to visit the webpage.



Contact us

We would love to know what you think of the toolkit. We want to improve it based on your feedback.

Please get in touch with us by emailing
IDEAL@exeter.ac.uk

If you prefer to write to us, then please address your letter to:

Living with Dementia Toolkit

PO Box 616

Exeter

EX1 9JB



www.livingwithdementiatoolkit.org.uk