

## **Droitwich Spa Meeting Centre celebrates after receiving almost £175,000 from the National Lottery to help local people living with dementia and family members/carers**

The Droitwich Spa Meeting Centre is today celebrating after being awarded almost £175,000 in National Lottery funding to support its work over the next four years with local people living with dementia and their family members/carers with disabilities.

The Meeting Centre, which is open each Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 10.30 to 3.30 at the Droitwich Rugby Club, is essentially a social club where its members and their care partners can come to enjoy the company of others in a normal community setting where they can relax, have fun, talk to others and get the help they need by participating in a variety of activities that address their emotional, cognitive and social requirements. This helps them to adjust to their changing needs and re-build their confidence and reduce anxiety over the future.

The Meeting Centre, the first of its kind in the UK, has been running since September 2015 and is staffed by a dedicated team from Age UK Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Around 12- 15 members attend each day, with some coming for just for one day each week, while others come for two or three days.

The new funding from The National Lottery Community Fund, which distributes money raised by National Lottery players for good causes and is the largest community funder in the UK, will remove uncertainty over the future of the Centre and provide a stable environment that will contribute to the Centre's members and carers health and wellbeing.

The funding will also enable the Meeting Centre to share its experience and help develop best practice with the wider dementia community through the Centre's participation in the National Lottery funded UK Meeting Centres Support Programme (UKMCSP) by hosting visits to Centre from visitors across the UK which are interested in setting up a Meeting Centre in their local area. The experience gained will also enable the Centre to build a strong evidence base for this and other Meeting Centres to present to local and national funders

and influence policy makers/commissioners in order to build a lasting legacy from the National Lottery funding.

**Derek Radcliffe, Chair of the Droitwich Spa Meeting Centre charity says:** “We’re delighted that The National Lottery Community Fund has recognised our work in this way. Now, thanks to National Lottery players we will be able to continue to help local people living with dementia and their family members. This is important because it helps members and their family members/carers both to build relationships with others facing similar challenges and to create their own supportive circle of friends.”

**Philip Talbot, Chief Executive of Age UK Herefordshire and Worcestershire says:** “ “A diagnosis of dementia can really overwhelm people, it impacts on their self-image, their relationships with other people and their confidence. We are, therefore, pleased to be able to provide a varied programme of activities at the Meeting Centre which helps people to rebuild their confidence, to feel less overwhelmed, to feel less lonely and less isolated”.

**Jeff Mayes, a former RAF Flight Lieutenant and member of the Centre says:** “I started to get dementia and everything went down from there, You feel as though you have got nothing left but this place has given me a purpose. You can join in with whatever’s going on and have a good time. The people at the Meeting Centre are so good, They are there to look after you but they keep the spirit going all the time. It’s a very happy place. I don’t know how I’d manage if I didn’t have this place to come to – it fills a big hole in my life”

**Professor Dawn Brooker, Director of the Association for Dementia Studies at the University of Worcester says:** “Meeting Centres are based on solid research about what really helps people and families cope with the challenges that dementia brings. The Association for Dementia Studies at the University of Worcester has been working on this research since 2014. There is tremendous interest across the UK in setting up new Meeting Centres. This funding will ensure that many more communities have the opportunity to visit a fully operational Meeting Centre and to receive practical advice on how to establish their own.”

**Ends**

**Contact**

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## **Pictures**

### **A picture of the handover of the che**

**Picture - left to right : Greg Westwood**, National Lottery Community Funding Manager – Worcestershire, Shropshire and Herefordshire presenting the cheque to **Mike Watts**, Secretary and Trustee of the Droitwich Spa Meeting Centre (DSMC) Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and **Derek Radcliffe**, Chair and Trustee of the DSMC CIO.

## **Notes to Editors:**

### **About The National Lottery Community Fund**

We are the largest community funder in the UK – we're proud to award money raised by National Lottery players to communities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Since June 2004, we have made over 200,000 grants and awarded over £9 billion to projects that have benefited millions of people.

We are passionate about funding great ideas that matter to communities and make a difference to people's lives. At the heart of everything we do is the belief that when people are in the lead, communities thrive. Thanks to the support of National Lottery players, our funding is open to everyone. We're privileged to be able to work with the smallest of local groups right up to UK-wide charities, enabling people and communities to bring their ambitions to life.

[Website](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)

### **About Droitwich Spa Meeting Centre Charitable Incorporated Organisation**

The Droitwich Spa Meeting Centre (DSMC) CIO was registered with the Charity Commission on 11 May 2017 with the purpose of providing a Meeting Centre in Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire and supporting others wishing to understand the work of the Meeting Centre and/or set up their own Meeting Centre. It hires the premises used by the Meeting Centre from the Droitwich Rugby Club and has a service delivery contract with Age UK Herefordshire & Worcestershire (Age UK H&W) covering the provision of the day-to-day activities at the Centre. <https://droitwichspameetingcentre.wordpress.com/>

### **About Age UK Herefordshire and Worcestershire**

Age UK Herefordshire and Worcestershire is an independent, local charity and brand partner of Age UK, working in the two counties and striving to make Herefordshire and Worcestershire a great place to grow older. Its main office is in Worcester, but also has offices in Hereford, Evesham and Ross and Droitwich. In addition to staffing and providing the day to day activities at the Droitwich Spa Meeting Centre its trained advisors offer free information and advice to older people and their families; offer support services to help people remain safe and independent in their home; have a range of wellbeing services to help people keep safe and well and offer health & social care training across the West Midlands. <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/herefordshireandworcestershire/about-us/>

### **About the Association for Dementia Studies at the University of Worcester**

The Association for Dementia Studies (ADS) was established in 2009 at the University of Worcester under the leadership of Professor Dawn Brooker. Their aim is to make a substantial contribution to building evidence-based practical ways of working with people living with dementia and their families that enables them to live well. The Association does this primarily through research, education and scholarship. It has also received a grant from the National Lottery Community Fund to help communities across the UK set up new Meeting Centres. More information can be found here: <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/dementia>