

BRIEFING TO OLDHAM HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Report Title: Dementia Buddy Guardian Angels

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Background:

Launched in Wigan in 2015, the Dementia charity organisation Good Deeds Trust started its Dementia Buddy's Guardian Angels project, aimed at supporting people living with Alzheimer's and Dementia and also helping their respective families and carers.

Founded by Councillors Mark and Karen Aldred, after Mark's father was diagnosed with Dementia, the project aims to provide Dementia and Alzheimer's sufferers with two free 'Guardian Angel' devices.

The devices, made by Connect Tech, come in the form of a

- Wristband
- Keyring,
- Zipper tag
- Badge

and allow members of the public to use their phones in a contactless method to scan the device.

The '*Tap Your Phone To Get Them Home*' method will then give them the name and an emergency contact number of the person who is in need of help. The idea behind the four devices is that the owner doesn't take them off, and by doing so are given an increased level of independence to go out, whilst helping to make them as safe as they possibly can be.

The scheme has already been launched on a small-scale in Oldham in Grotton, and has been supported to date by the Saddleworth Community Policing Team.

How was the idea for the Guardian Angel project developed

The idea started from one of our Dementia Café meetings, when we asked people living with Dementia and their carers what they feared most.

Carers replied,

"Our biggest fear is our loved ones forgetting where they live or where they are, we need something so they can be found if they get lost."

People with Dementia said,

"I don't want my partner worrying about me when I go out, as I worry about them then. I asked for something to help me as I still want my freedom to go out on my own."

We then went away to look at modern technology to see if we could help. We came up with several devices and took them to our next Dementia Café in Atherton and showed them to both carers and their partners with Dementia. Most people decided on the four main devices.

The reason they picked the wrist band, bag/Zip tags, badges and key rings (pictured above) is that everyone told us that when their loved one with Dementia went out they would always pick up and wear the same hat, bag or coat. So these devices can be attached to any.

Carers then said,

"At last something that reassures us and gives us hope that a kind person or the Police will be able to notify us if our loved ones get confused or lost while they are out on their own. We was asked what we needed for a change rather than what we can have. That is why the Guardian Angels work. We picked the four devices that Good Deeds Trust have produced, as we know what is best for us and our loved ones."

People living with Dementia said,

"Good Deeds Trust asked us, what worried us most, and what would help us? Then they asked us which devices we would pick. What a difference people listening to us makes. It was really nice to be asked. The device is a bit like a comfort blanket. I love the wrist band personally, I never take it off. They're our Guardian Angels really."

How do the devices work

If you see anyone who looks confused or is lost and needs your help, and are wearing one of our easy recognisable Guardian Angels, just follow the easy steps below:

1. Hold the back of your NFC enabled phone flat over the Guardian Angel device and the person's first name & emergency contact number will be displayed.
2. Just click on the telephone number to speak to their loved one to get them home safe and sound.

Requirement from the Health and Wellbeing Board

The Board is asked to:

- 1) Note the report
- 2) Discuss the Guardian Angel project and agree the next steps necessary for this to be rolled out across the borough.