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MONUMENT**

European Regional Development Fund

# MONUMENT



**MOre NUrturing and More  
Empowerment Nested in Technology**

**Norfolk Pilot Project – a summary**

February 2023

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## Context

The MOre NUrturing and More Empowerment Nested in Technology (MONUMENT) Project was devised to support informal carers of people living with dementia by offering structured professional support, as well as developing and testing technological solutions with carers. The Lead Partner was Mechelen City in Belgium with ten Project Partners in total across the UK, Netherlands, Belgium and France. They include experts in the Odense House concept, the care sector, dementia research and technology innovation.

The Norfolk pilot project was part of this larger European Project designed to improve the resilience of carers for people living with dementia. The underpinning concept comes from the Odense House model. An Odense House is an accessible meeting place for people living with dementia, their family, and friends. Within an Odense House, activities are co-constructed, people support one another, and the sharing of experiences, information and advice is at the heart of the approach.

Whilst the other project pilots by the adjoining partners focussed on a building which was developed into a version of an Odense House, the Norfolk Pilot focused on offering training and support to several venues which would then support people to access outdoor spaces safely. The project also looked at assistive technology which would support people to get outdoors.

The MONUMENT project pilot was led locally by the Environment Service at Norfolk County Council, working closely with colleagues in Adult Social Services and UK and European partners to ensure learning and opportunities from this project are embedded within the Service's wider practices.

In Norfolk, the total budget for the pilot project was €787,575 with a 60% co-financing rate meaning funding totalling €472,545 was provided by the European Union via the European Regional Development Fund's Interreg 2 Seas Programme. The remaining 40% of the budget, at €315,030 came from match-funding provided by Norfolk County Council in the form of revenue-funded staff time and capital. This came from both the Environment Service and Adult Social Services budgets.

This summary looks at the three key stages of activity.

- Activity 1 Engage- looks at where the project sits within wider objectives, the setting up of regional networks, focus groups and steering groups. This activity defined the regional scope of the Odense House concept.
- Activity 2: Deliver- This stage involved setting up the Odense House concept model in Norfolk.
- Activity 3: Reflect - considers the impact of, and learning from, the project.

## Activity 1: Engage.

MONUMENT fits within the wider health and wellbeing objectives of the Norfolk and Suffolk 25 Year Plan for the Environment and also meets the objectives of Themes 1,4 7 and 8 of the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan 2019-2029. Theme 7 is the most relevant. These are:

### **NAIP Theme 1 - Well managed Access Network**

We will manage a well-signed and maintained network of multiuse routes efficiently and economically (Public Rights of Way and promoted Norfolk Trails and the National Trail in Norfolk) providing access to coastal, rural and urban areas, using good systems and standards.

### **NAIP Theme 2 - Well connected Access Network**

We will develop an integrated green network of routes and paths that provides opportunities for all users; improves ecological resilience; creates opportunities to connect with green space and places of natural and cultural heritage; improves connections for work/education/recreation for residents and addresses other gaps with demonstrable need where possible, both within and outside targeted 'growth' areas.

### **NAIP Theme 7 - An Access Network that supports/delivers Health Outcomes**

We will improve the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors through initiatives which promote and demonstrate the benefits of physical activity to those not currently using the access network or who would benefit from additional physical activity as identified in the Norfolk Public Health Strategy.

### **NAIP Theme 8 - A Valuable Access Network**

We will maximise the economic benefits to Norfolk that are generated through the access network by working with businesses, tourism agencies and Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) etc.

Locally, the Environment Service at Norfolk County Council decided to focus the pilot project on reducing the barriers identified by carers of people living with dementia in accessing the outdoors and realising its associated health benefits. Much of the work was focused on specific pilot locations where training and support was given to staff, dementia friendly activities developed, and leisure activities offered to carers. The project pilot site locations for the informal support sessions were identified in a regional mapping scoping exercises as Great Yarmouth and Greater Norwich.

A range of Community leisure activities were also developed and the scope for these was wider with development open to any group in Norfolk. Work for this element was coordinated with the Development Worker Team in Adult Social Services. The Environment Service also worked alongside colleagues in the Assistive Technology team.

Alongside teams within Norfolk County Council other key stakeholders were identified as:

- Age UK Norwich
- The Alzheimer's Society
- Voluntary Norfolk
- Norfolk Carers Partnership (Bridges Outcome Partnership)
- Dementia Adventure
- Innovations in Dementia Community Interest Company

- Tech East Ltd.
- Young Dementia UK

An original full Project Partner, Voluntary Norfolk, withdrew from the project. They were meant to have been the second full Project Partner in Norfolk alongside Norfolk County Council and were going to be the half of the pilot which focused on carer engagement. As the covid pandemic hit, Voluntary Norfolk had to completely pull out of the project as they had to refocus their time to recruit and support volunteers to provide support for those impacted by the pandemic. Adult Social Services at Norfolk County Council stepped in to provide the missing match-funding and carer engagement expertise with input from their Development Worker team.

The main target audience for the project was informal carers of people living with mild to moderate dementia with a secondary target audience of people living with dementia, local support providers and community volunteers, nature conservation or leisure organisations and policy makers.

An internal steering group was established to support development of the project. This group included representatives from across Norfolk County Council, the Broads Authority and Active Norfolk. Teams and stakeholders represented or invited were:

- Environment
- Active Norfolk
- Development Workers (Adult Social Services)
- Assistive Technology (Adult Social Services)
- Broads Authority
- Culture & Heritage
- Environment
- Libraries Community Info & Learning
- MONUMENT
- Public health
- Trails Team

Focus groups were held with carers of people living with dementia and external stakeholders to look at barriers to accessing outdoor spaces and consider assistive technology.

## Activity 2: Deliver

Following on from the work of Activity 1 the delivery phase involved setting up the Outdoor Odense concept model in Norfolk by providing formal training for carers, volunteers, and outdoor/leisure professionals, developing informal support sessions, offering leisure activities and a Family Day. Where possible work was closely aligned with existing carer support services (such as Dementia Cafes).

Assistive technology was trialled, and the project part funded the Active Norfolk Every Move Activity finder [www.everymove.uk](http://www.everymove.uk). The project was also involved in creating a Design and

Access Statement for the Gressenhall Access to Nature Project for the design of a dementia-friendly walk.

### Supported leisure activities

A wide range of outdoor activities were provided by the project. Some were more adventurous such as sailing, canoeing and bushcraft. Others involved short walks in nature and guided walks around parts of Norwich. This imaginative mix of events catered for a range of interests and needs. Although aimed primarily at carers, many people living with dementia also attended and enjoyed the events. Many carers needed to bring the person that they cared for due to a lack of respite care. Others were accompanied by the person living with dementia because they were their spouse and enjoyed doing things together.

Venue	Activity type	Carers engaged	People living with dementia engaged
Geocaching in Horsford Woods	Initial scoping session with carer	1	0
Fairhaven Woodlands and water garden	Guided walk and boat trip	8	4
Green Light Trust	Bushcraft skills and campfire cooking	9	1
Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse Museum	Crafts, cooking, guided tour	16	11
Nancy Oldfield Trust	Boating activities	20	11
Ranworth Broads	Guided walk	18	7
Redwings Equine Sanctuary	Meet and greet with horses and staff	11	7
UEA Paston Trails	Guided walk around historic Norwich	4	3
Victory Swim and Fitness Centre	Inclusive swimming sessions	3	2
Walk Norfolk	Guided walk on Marriott's Way	4	0
Watatunga	Self-drive safari tour	13	2
<b>Total engagements</b>		<b>107</b>	<b>47</b>

## Informal Support

Alongside the outdoor activities provided, the project supported a number of clubs and activities to provide companionship and stimulation.

Venue	Session Type	Carers engaged	People living with dementia engaged
Community Culture Club, Museum of Norwich	Local heritage inspired creative activities	36	17
The Boundary Pub- Craft Union	Mix of crafts, pub games and music	34	26
Mary Magdalene Church - Gorleston	Craft activity	12	8
Hellesdon library	Crafts and activities	83	55
Gorleston library	Crafts and activities	5	2
Cuddly Cavies	Therapeutic contact with animals	11	10
Taverham Library	Crafts and activities	4	4
Louise Hamilton Centre	Crafts and activities	7	3
Gorleston Memory Club	One-off Jubilee celebration	6	4
Scratby Memory Club	One-off Jubilee celebration	7	7
<b>Total engagements</b>		<b>205</b>	<b>136</b>



*Carers go pond dipping at Ranworth Broad*



*Carers go sailing with The Nancy Oldfield Trust*

## Family Day

A Family Day was held on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at the Costessey centre in Norwich. This event offered a platform to show case local dementia-friendly organisations and to celebrate the project's work. The hybrid event allowed families to enjoy quality time together and for carers to discover relevant services. Over 100 people attended.

Organisation	Offer
<b>The Nancy Oldfield Trust</b>	Awareness building and promotion of sailing and similar water sport opportunities at Nancy Oldfield
<b>Cavies &amp; Cake</b>	Conversation, guinea-pig handling, awareness building and promotion of therapeutic opportunities through Cavies & Cake
<b>NCC Library services</b>	Conversation, awareness building and promotion of library community initiatives in the local area. Craft activities included. Demonstrations of 'Story Bags' and reminiscence activities
<b>Community Culture Club &amp; Museum of Norwich</b>	Costumed staff assisted with Medieval object handling, awareness building and promotion of accessible museum opportunities in and around Norwich.
<b>Age UK, Norfolk</b>	Awareness building and promotion of charitable activities and initiatives in the local area.
<b>NCC Trails team</b>	Promotion of accessible walking routes in Norfolk
<b>NCC Assistive Technology Team</b>	Demonstrations, awareness building and promotion of technology and assessments available
<b>Alzheimer's Society, Norfolk</b>	Awareness building and promotion of charitable activities and initiatives in the local area.
<b>Everyone Active, Victory Swim and Fitness</b>	Awareness building and promotion of leisure facilities with discount offered.
<b>Caring Together, Carers Voice</b>	Awareness building and promotion of Carers Voice support for carers and PLWD
<b>MONUMENT info table</b>	Awareness building and promotion of project and forthcoming activities. competition to win family pass to Gressenhall Museum
<b>MONUMENT craft table</b>	Conversation and crafting - plant pot decorating and planting of sunflower seeds
<b>Home Instead</b>	Awareness building and promotion of Home Instead support for carers and PLWD
<b>Filigree Face &amp; Body Art (Face Painting)</b>	Free activity courtesy of MONUMENT
<b>Charlotte 1940s singer</b>	Afternoon performance of 1940s and 1950s classics

<b>Punch and Judy</b>	Traditional entertainment courtesy of MONUMENT
<b>Salvation army</b>	Awareness building and promotion of Salvation Army's Dementia Cafes in Norwich area, including community initiatives at Sunshine Cafe
<b>Risi Bici Cafe Deli</b>	Food vendor. 100 lunch vouchers provided to event attendees courtesy of MONUMENT
<b>Pro-Event Medical</b>	Provision of First Aid cover
<b>Creative Mojo</b>	Awareness building and promotion of at-home craft kits, and community craft clubs and therapeutic arts. Crafting table included Forget-Me-Knot painting activity.
<b>EPIC</b>	outdoor seated games (bowls and bocchia) and promotion of leisure facilities and groups in the area, including intergenerational clubs and accessible sports

## Training

Dementia Adventure were commissioned by the pilot project to deliver training to unpaid carers, community groups, and outdoor organisations, which focused on removing barriers and providing practical solutions. Training videos were also created and delivered in December 2022. These are hosted on Norfolk County Council's YouTube channel.

The original plan to deliver to families and carers was revised after initial sessions had very low take up of these cohorts. Plans to hold face to face training was also severely impacted by covid restrictions. As a result, the delivery plan agreed by the project team and Dementia Adventure underwent a number of adaptations resulting in most training being delivered online. Eleven sessions were delivered with four carers and 80 professionals taking part.

A separate set of specialised training was commissioned from the Dementia Services Development Centre at the University of Stirling, with the specific purpose of improving staff understanding of dementia-friendly design.

## Assistive Technology

A focus group held early in the project asked carers what was stopping them accessing outdoor spaces. The feedback emphasised two principal areas of concern:

- The person living with dementia getting lost.
- Physical problems moving around sites

Other points made were the reluctance of many living with dementia to recognise that they had the condition and their dislike of aids that made them look 'old'.

Two solutions were trailed. The first is a GPS Footprint tracker which includes an SOS button. If pressed, the button connects to a mobile phone so the carer can reassure the person living with dementia. The tracker can also be followed on Google maps and is updated every two minutes. A group of ten trialled these at one of the locations (Redwings) and four took them home to trial.

Tramper vehicle have been purchased for use at Gressenhall. These are a multi terrain vehicles and the tricycle version was chosen as it resembled a motorbike rather than a wheelchair.

The other element of technology linked to the project was input to the Active Norfolk Every Move Activity Finder website. [www.everymove.uk](http://www.everymove.uk)

### Activity 3: Reflect

A regional focus group for key stakeholders was held on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022 designed to allow time for reflection on the project. Ten attendees representing eight teams or organisations:

- MONUMENT team, Norfolk County Council
- Norfolk Museum Services, Norfolk County Council
- Active Norfolk
- Norfolk Library Services, Norfolk County Council
- Culture & Heritage, Norfolk County Council
- Environment. Team Norfolk County Council
- MONUMENT team, Norfolk County Council
- The National Trust

Discussion looked at the understanding of the Odense House concept among stakeholders, the support needed to implement it, how the concept helped in providing better care and support to carers and what feedback they had from carers. There were also reflections on the MeMo and EveryMove websites and the assistive technology trialled as part of the project.

For most participants, taking part in the local pilot project was the first time they had encountered the concept of the Odense House. There was general agreement that a more meaningful local term would be useful, and participants wondered if this was an issue for other countries taking part.

In terms of support needed to implement the concept within an organisation, knowledge, training and signposting were all mentioned. A key recommendation from this discussion focussed on the need to engage with carers and people living with dementia from the start of any project.

*Actually getting the needs from the community,  
so it can be driven up that way.  
Rather than people putting in a strategy without.*

Having a dedicated, paid member of staff whose role was to build a model from the bottom up, gain the trust of carers and people living with dementia and ensure that activities were well planned with all safeguarding in place was identified as key to a successful project.

A discussion around very early support for people living with dementia flagged up the higher thresholds for support in a UK context. The need for early conversations with people diagnosed and their carers was emphasised, but it was acknowledged that this could be difficult. A focus on living life to the full and enjoyment was considered important, as was looking at each person as an individual and seeing their specific needs. The Odense House

concept was seen as being a different thing to different people and able to offer individualised support.

The idea of adapting or using existing venues was identified and shopping centres and community centres were discussed. It was suggested that existing assets could be reviewed, and new housing developments examined to identify opportunities from the out-set, particularly for outdoor spaces, and helping carers and people living with dementia to access these.

Some issues were flagged up with identification of carers a major challenge. Many carers don't identify as such and see themselves as at another stage in life where they happen to be taking more care of their spouse or family member.

Building links with professionals was identified as challenging, for example within the health service post covid. Other partnerships developed could be initially strong but if

these relied on one individual with a particular interest in the project who then left the partnership could fold or need to be rebuilt from scratch.

Moving onto websites linked to the project It was agreed that the target audience for the MeMo website was unclear and although it contained useful information it was hard to access this. It was also described as text heavy, and the purpose of the site was not clear.

The EveryMove website and activity finder was described as simple to use and the look and feel was liked. The search and filter functions were too generic, and it was felt that the site would be improved if searches gave more options, possibly listed in a criteria order. At present it was too common to get nothing back from searches. It was recommended that 'dementia friendly' should be added as a search term.

The benefits of assistive technology were acknowledged however, some concerns were raised. One was the cost of hi-tech solutions and concerns around unequal access to this for those on low incomes. Whilst technology can offer carers reassurance it can also add to anxieties if they struggle to use it or feel the need to constantly check monitoring technology. The need for a person-centred approach was emphasised. This was backed up by low take up of assistive technology provided by the project. While four carers originally came forward to do home trials with the GPS Footprint trackers, on interview only two participants feeding back that they had used GPS trackers in a limited way.



*Autumn crafts at Taverham Library*

Other reflections taken from feedback throughout the project look at the response of carers who took part. Feedback from those taking part in supported activities showed that all reported feeling happy or very happy as they left the venue. The word cloud below shows the words most commonly used in 93 responses.



Those who attended informal activities reported that these were enjoyable, carers valued meeting other carers and signposting to additional support was valuable. Similarly, the Family Day was described as fun and informative.

*My mum (carer), dad (person with Alzheimer's) and I (carer) had an enjoyable time. It was good to try different things – painting, hedgehog making, stroking the guinea pigs, Punch and Judy etc and to see my dad getting involved at his own pace. There was useful information we took away with us, and we were amazed at the free lunch! It was well organised and set out and we stayed much longer than we thought we would.*

Eight carers were interviewed in January 2023 to understand what impact the project was still having. All carers spoken to agreed that the activities had given them a boost mentally and this had been long lasting. Two mentioned photographs that had been shared after the event and talked about how these helped the person they cared for remember and chat about their experience. Others had shared images on social media and with friends and family and were delighted that there was something positive to share in this way. Although few had since returned to outdoor venues these were now considered an option although many felt that without organised events a visit may be very challenging. Others would be unable to visit without transport provision.

The project was summed up by one carer as 'a lovely generous, creative project' which came at a time when she was struggling.

The Pathways into Nature training was evaluated via a survey of participants. Results from this show that it was effective in informing participants about the benefits of accessing nature and many planned to make changes as a result of the training.

	Agree strongly	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree strongly	No response
I have a better understanding of the health and wellbeing benefits of outdoor activity	26	17	2	1	0	0
I have increased knowledge of how to plan an outdoor experience programme	28	18	0	0	0	0
I plan to change my actions as a result of this training	15	28	2	1	0	0
I will share what I have learnt with My team, colleagues.	26	19	1	0	0	0
I believe that the tools provided will be help me plan and deliver successful activities	26	16	1	0	0	3

Responses gathered from a total of 46 *Pathways Into Nature* trainee delegates who completed the feedback questionnaire.

Participants described how their understanding around the complexity of dementia was increased. Most mentioned that the practical tips and tools were useful. When asked what actions they plan to take as a result of the training people wrote of integrating the ideas into their current activities. It is clear that the participants felt a greater empathy having been on the training and planned to act on this moving forward. The short-term outcomes of the training provided was for them to incorporate best practice into their forward planning thus opening up more opportunities for carers and people living with dementia to access outdoor spaces and activities.

## Lessons learnt and successes

Key learning points for the project:

**Transport Provision:** availability of transport is a barrier for this group. Many carers are elderly and no longer drive. If affordable transport cannot be sourced, then access to many of the opportunities provided by the project will be limited to those with higher incomes or with an existing support network who can drive them. The most isolated carers cannot benefit without transport being considered.

**Communication and Pre-Visit Information:** Evaluation work highlighted the lack of easily accessible, quality information available to carers looking to attend an activity

or event. Carers wanted to know about accessibility infrastructure (such as toilets, shelter, cafes) but they also wanted to know if the people working at the venue would be understanding and non-judgemental. Some also mentioned that they liked to know if there were quieter times at the venue. There is a need for much clearer information showing that venues are dementia friendly.

**Organisational Continuity and Structure:** There was a challenge of relying on individuals within organisations and the risk of that individual leaving meaning relationships have to be rebuilt.

**Embedding Legacy:** The sudden end of funding from the project means that the leisure activities ended abruptly. Positive relationships were fostered with providers interested in running dementia-friendly activities but there currently isn't a plan for how this legacy will be embedded going forward.

Key successes of the pilot project:

**Multiple locations:** Using various venues worked well. The most successful repeat-visit events were the informal peer support sessions which were very local to where people lived. The pilot project successfully showed how the concept of the Odense House could be delivered without needing the focus of one building. Outdoor venues and community buildings were successfully used to deliver high quality engagement and offer support and signposting to carers.

**Training:** Training helped venues and activity providers support visitors living with dementia and their carers and this will have a lasting impact. The clubs that continue to run are committed for the long term and are providing valuable support.

**Trusted relationships:** Many of the more rural leisure activity days stemmed from positive relationship building built-up at the local informal peer support sessions. Carers and people living with dementia were more likely to try something new for the first time if it was alongside a trusted local group or existing professional who they had already built up a rapport with. The Project Team were highly successful in building a positive rapport with carers, people living with dementia and providers.

**Joined-up Approach:** The project brought several departments of Norfolk County Council together for the first time and has benefitted from this joined up approach across the council. Learning and innovative training opportunities have been shared across departments.

**Wellbeing benefits:** Perhaps most importantly, one of the words that was evident during research for the evaluation of the project was 'fun'. Carers and people with dementia often fed back on how much fun they had on boats, in buggies, watching birds and animals, walking, tasting apples and generally having new experiences. The wellbeing benefits were not only short-term since some carers reported that the person living with dementia was still referring to their outdoor experience several months on. Props such as photos from the day helped with this. Some carers reported a temporary lift in feelings of burden when partaking in the outdoor activities alongside other carers.



*Carers and people living with dementia trying out mobility scooters at Fairhaven Woodland and Water Garden.*

## Conclusion

The pilot project successfully showed how the concept of the Odense House could be delivered without needing the focus of one building. Outdoor venues and community buildings were successfully used to deliver high quality engagement and offer support and signposting to carers. Training helped venues support visitors living with dementia and their carers and this will have a lasting impact. The clubs that continue to run are committed for the long term and are providing valuable support.

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