

## Dementia Friendly Darlington

### Darlington Borough Council Taxi Policy Review



Dementia Friendly Darlington is a Dementia Friendly Community (an Alzheimer's Society programme) that works together with people living with and affected by dementia, local communities, businesses, services and people of all ages to make Darlington a place where people with dementia live well, are included, understood and able to fully participate as they choose.

Transport plays a vital role in the lives and wellbeing of people living with and affected by dementia and we welcome the opportunity to respond to Darlington Borough Council's public consultation over proposed changes to the way taxis and private hire vehicles are licensed and operated and would welcome the opportunity to work with Darlington Borough Council and the Tees Valley Licensing Group (TVLG) to become a Dementia Friendly Taxi Service.

Becoming a **Dementia Friendly Taxi Service** ensures that all staff (drivers and booking staff) are dementia aware. This is one of the most important things that you can do to provide a positive and inclusive experience for people with dementia and carers. It also supports drivers and booking staff to feel more confident.

There are two main ways that we are proposing for Dementia Friendly Darlington to work with Darlington Borough Council and the Tees Valley Licensing Group

#### 1. Become a Dementia Friendly Taxi Service

**Join Dementia Friends** - We encourage all drivers and staff (including new applicants, existing drivers and private hire controller staff to increase their awareness and understanding of dementia by becoming Dementia Friends through our [Dementia Friends initiative](#). This includes taking part in an online Dementia Friends Information Session to understand how dementia affects a person and the actions drivers can take to support people affected by dementia who are their customers.

**Use Dementia-friendly signage and promotional material** – You can download our [environment checklist](#) to ensure your environment and signage is fit for purpose.

**Download our business guidance** - For more dementia-friendly guidance for your service, download our [dementia-friendly business guide](#)

#### 2. Ideas for actions that can be done now

We would like to propose some key actions that can be done now to support people affected by dementia during the coronavirus pandemic to raise awareness and ensure people with dementia can still access local amenities and essential travel. This includes:

- A programme of online Dementia Friends Information Sessions can be led by Dementia Friendly Darlington to existing drivers and controller staff.
- Consider working with pharmacy chains for prescription deliveries.
- Use taxis as central points to put up information about local Darlington Dementia Adviser and support services that are available during Covid-19
- Prioritise pick-ups for vulnerable groups.
- Reassure customers of how you are keeping your taxis clean and sanitised and provide hand sanitiser and wipes in vehicles.

**Additional ideas and responses include:**

- Once taxi services have become Dementia Friends and have taken steps to become Dementia Friendly Services, they can display Dementia Friendly Darlington's 'Working to become Dementia Friendly' sticker to inform passengers that they are dementia friendly.
- Be aware of the Sunflower Lanyard Scheme for people with hidden disabilities  
<https://hiddendisabilitiesstore.com/>
- Consider the continuity and consistency of taxi drivers for people with dementia and carers
- With the consent of people affected by dementia and carers, consider having an emergency contact on a database to contact for support for passengers in a safeguarding situation e.g. confusion or distress.
- Work with Dementia Friendly Darlington and people with dementia to create Dementia Friendly taxi cards and promotional material.
- Please make sure to read the Alzheimer's Society's regularly updated information on [face coverings for people affected by dementia](#).

You can also find more information at:

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-involved/dementia-friendly-communities/organisations/transport>

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