



Kent Association of Local Councils – MEDIA RELEASE 24 May 2018

KALC collaborates with Alzheimer’s Society and Kent Fire & Rescue Service to help combat dementia

KALC has joined up with Alzheimer’s Society and Kent Fire & Rescue Service to help local communities across the county combat dementia in their local areas. At Kent Fire & Rescue Service HQ on 24 May, the Chairman of KALC, Cllr Sarah Barker, and Jackie Swapp, Alzheimer’s Society Operations Manager for Kent and Medway, jointly signed a strategic commitment on dementia. Kent Fire and Rescue Service were instrumental in developing the strategic commitment through their participation in the Prime Minister’s Challenge Group on Dementia Friendly Communities and bringing KALC and the Alzheimer’s Society together on this important national initiative.

KALC, Alzheimer’s Society and Kent Fire & Rescue believe that Parish and Town Councils have the potential skills and understanding to make communities safer, more accessible and sustainable for all. We will work together to support our member Councils to achieve their potential and support their communities to fight against this disease.

By signing this very important strategic commitment, KALC will:

- *help our members develop the necessary awareness, skills and understanding to recognise and support people living with dementia in the communities we serve;*
- *work together and with our local partners to help maintain and improve the general safety, health and wellbeing of people living with dementia, their families and carers;*
- *support Alzheimer’s Society in their quest to develop more Dementia Friendly Communities and Dementia Friends in line with the Prime Minister’s challenge on dementia;*
- *work with the Alzheimer’s Society and other recognised experts to share best practice and publicise effective policies, procedures, practices and training.*

Jackie Swapp, Alzheimer’s Society Operations Manager for Kent and Medway said: “It is great to hear of the positive work happening in Kent, with KALC and Kent Fire and Rescue Service. This Dementia Action Week (21-27 May), we are calling on everyone to unite and take actions, big or small, to improve the everyday lives of people affected by dementia.”

“In the UK, one person develops dementia every three minutes and there are 23,921 people in Kent and Medway living with dementia. Almost everyone knows someone whose life has been affected. Yet too many people face the condition alone, without adequate support.

“Alzheimer’s Society is determined to change this and everyone has a part to play in creating a dementia-friendly UK, which is why it is so great to see KALC and Kent Fire and Rescue making this commitment to people affected by dementia. “

Cllr Sarah Barker, Chairman of KALC, said: *“We are delighted to work with the Alzheimer’s Society and Kent Fire & Rescue Service in raising awareness and increasing understanding about dementia. Some of our local Councils are already involved in projects linked to raising dementia awareness. We will support them and all our member Councils in helping to alleviate the effects of local people living with dementia.”*

Sean Bone-Knell, Director of Operations for Kent Fire and Rescue Service and member of the Prime Minister’s Challenge Group on Dementia Friendly Communities, said: *“We are delighted that KALC have joined blue light services and local councils in signing a strategic commitment on dementia, Parish and Town Councils are at the very heart of their community. I believe that with their valuable input and commitment we really can work towards building safer and more dementia friendly communities.”*

Ends...

Notes for Editors:

1. KALC represents 304 (96%) of Parish and Town Councils and Parish Meetings (Local Councils) across Kent and Medway, representing an electorate of over 650,000 from right across suburban, rural and urban Kent. The National Association represents 9,000 Local Councils in England and Wales - over 16 million people live in communities served by local councils.

2. Local Councils are statutory bodies and are the first tier of local government in England. Their activities fall into three main categories: representing the local community; delivering services to meet local needs; striving to improve quality of life and community well-being.

3. Through an extensive range of discretionary powers Local Councils provide and maintain a variety of important and visible local services including allotments, bridleways, burial grounds, bus shelters, car parks, commons and open spaces, community transport schemes, community safety and crime reduction measures, events and festivals, footpaths, leisure and sports facilities, litter bins, public toilets, planning, street cleaning and lighting, tourism activities, traffic calming measures, village greens and youth projects.

4. For more information on the Strategic Commitment on dementia please read here for the NALC website: [nalc-strategic-commitment-on-dementia](#); KALC website:

www.kentalc.gov.uk and here for Alzheimer's Society website: [resources-creating-dementia-friendly-communities](#).

5. KALC's signing of the Strategic Commitment on dementia complements the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) strategic commitment which was signed on 31 October 2017 by the NALC Chairman and Angela Rippon, Alzheimer's Society Ambassador and co-chair for The Prime Minister's Champion Group on Dementia Friendly Communities.

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