

The Big Society project 'Battle Dementia'

www.battledementia.co.uk

by Gareth Rowlands JP

An update on what the Big Society project has achieved so far

- 1 The project continues to provide help, advice and support for carers of elderly and frail folk including, in particular, those most unfortunate to be suffering from Alzheimers disease and various stages of dementia.
- 2 The project highlights that over 800 000 people in the United Kingdom suffer from some form of dementia.
- 3 The multi-page website demonstrates how a Big Society project can provide much needed help in the community.
- 4 Visitors to the website have an opportunity to donate funds to Dementia UK and the Alzheimers Society.
- 5 Free downloads in the form of activity booklets are available on the website. ('Activities for Today' and 'Activities and the Battle against Dementia' both written by the website owner, Gareth Rowlands).
- 6 The Big Society project has enabled me to arrange and give talks on activities to carers of the elderly (at Parkfield Medical Centre, Potters Bar).
- 7 The project has also enabled me to make regular visits to the Alzheimers Society Drop In Centre, Potters Bar to give help and support with running suitable activities.
- 8 When the Drop In Centre faced closure due to lack of funding, I was able (after acting on advice from Mr Grant Shapps MP) to obtain the help of the MP for Hertsmere, Mr James Clappison to secure funds for the centre for the foreseeable future.
- 9 The website helps to promote the work of the Alzheimers Society and Dementia UK where carers can obtain help and professional advice.
- 10 The national care magazine 'Caring UK' is advertised on the website.
- 11 The website gives people an opportunity to share their own outdoor experiences through the medium of photography as described by

This England.org on the website.

- 12 There is an important link to the Chairman of the Conservative party, Mr Grant Shapps' website.
- 13 There is a forum on the website inviting visitors to make suggestions for new activities.
- 14 There are articles on Alzheimers disease and dementia on the website.
- 15 The website Battle Dementia has attracted the attention of the Alzheimers Society in numerous ways and is recognised by the Society as a dementia friendly community, a vital strand of the Prime Minister's challenge on dementia.