

# Reading With Dementia

## Volunteer role profile

### Background

Reading with Dementia is an exciting and important project delivered by Suffolk Libraries in partnership with, and funded by, The Reading Agency.

Dementia is not a universal part of aging, it does not happen to everyone as they age. However, there are some diseases that affect the brain and stop it working properly. These diseases could mean people have problems with their memory, thinking or speaking, or they may find it harder to do things others take for granted, they affect different parts of the brain meaning they affect people in different ways. When these problems get worse over time, doctors may diagnose this as dementia.

The effects of dementia can be challenging and upsetting for the person with the condition and those that love and care for them.



Reading with Dementia is a new programme developed by Suffolk Libraries, with The Reading Agency, to support people living with dementia and their carers. Our libraries are safe spaces for anyone to come and talk to like-minded people about their experience with dementia, and to access resources available to them through the library, including the Reading Well collection.

To support this philosophy, Suffolk Libraries is setting up book groups in three libraries across Suffolk. In each location both carers and people living with dementia will be invited, and it will provide a weekly opportunity and safe space, to be together and access support from one another, as well as resources available.

In each location, we will be particularly trying to work with less heard voices within the community, who are experiencing dementia (either as a carer or a person living with dementia).

The locations and priority groups are as follows:

<b>Location</b>	<b>Priority Group</b>
Ipswich County Library	Ethnic Minorities
Lowestoft Library	Learning Disabled
Newmarket Library	LGBTQIA+

We are looking for volunteers to support staff to run these groups. It would be beneficial if you have an existing understanding of dementia and how it can affect those living with it. It would also be advantageous if you have connection to the priority group in the location you would be interested in volunteering at.

The level of commitment for this role is approximately 2 hours per week.

#### Key elements of the role:

- Undertaking the appropriate training
- With support of Library staff, set up and provide refreshments
- Follow all safeguarding procedures and inform us of any concerns of participants wellbeing
- Engage attendees in conversation around dementia, the resources available and encourage group discussion
- Support the group and library staff in developing a timetable of activity
- Welcome and support new attendees.

#### Person specification:

We are looking for volunteers who are:

- Able to communicate effectively
- Able to maintain confidentiality, be discreet and trustworthy
- 18 years and over
- Friendly, empathetic and non-judgemental
- Committed and well organised
- Approachable and able to listen carefully.