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**Dementia Inclusive
Singing Network**

Making spaces more dementia inclusive

**Created by the Dementia Inclusive Singing Network with the
Age Scotland Dementia Training Team**

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Making spaces dementia inclusive

Dementia can make it difficult for some people to find their way around a building. As a group or organisation including people who have dementia in activities there are changes that can be made in premises, often for low or no cost, to reduce the problems that people with dementia may encounter. Even if there are changes which you cannot make, being aware of these factors that might cause barriers can be helpful.

Not all changes will be necessary for everyone living with dementia as dementia affects people in different ways. However, the changes outlined in this guide are some suggestions which could be considered.

Lighting

As we age, we need more light for sight. Things to consider:

- Ensure interiors are well-lit, with as much daylight as possible.
- Minimise shadows by having lighting that is well diffused rather than spotlights.
- Light on shiny floors can produce a glare and may be mistaken for water.



Floors

Avoid flooring that is shiny or has a complex pattern. To some people with dementia a dark doormat may appear as a hole and may be a barrier.

Ideally floors should be in a contrasting colour to that of surrounding walls and furniture.

Doors

Doors which have a good colour contrast to the walls are best. If this is not possible then having signage on the door could be helpful.



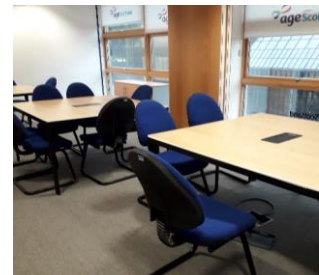
Signs and décor

Avoid abstract words or images in signs. Keep them simple: use bold letters, include pictures that are obvious and ensure there is a good contrast between the text on the sign and the background. Black writing on a yellow background give a good contrast. Ensure signs are at eye-level wherever possible. Signage for accessing toilets and exits are particularly important.

If it is possible can you add temporary signs to the venue whilst you are running your activity?

Furnishings

Avoid abstract furniture designs: if it's a chair, it should look like a chair. Make sure there is good colour contrast between the furniture and the floor. Also, seating should be arranged so that this can enable good eye contact between members of the group.



Toilets

As well as good clear signage to and from toilets, coloured toilets seats may benefit some people.

Noise

A lot of noise can be distracting or distressing for some people living with dementia, especially if they cannot ignore it, or they don't know where it is coming from.

Having a quiet space for people to use if they are finding the noise too much is ideal if this is possible.



The Dementia Services Development Centre at the University of Stirling offers specialist advice on dementia inclusive design. Call 01786 467740 or visit www.dementia.stir.ac.uk.

DEEP, the Dementia Engagement and Empowerment Project, produce a range of guides on holding events and meetings which are inclusive for people living with dementia. <https://www.dementiavoices.org.uk/deep-guides/>.

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