WORKING TO BUILD A DEMENTIA FRIENDLY HARTLEPOOL

Checklists for Dementia Friendly environments

Briefing note for Organisations in Hartlepool

Based on material created by Hampshire County Council, Local Government Association and "Innovations in Dementia" CIC which has been recognised nationally as "best practice"

[Update due Spring 2015]

Making Hartlepool a Dementia Friendly Community

Environmental checklists

There are a number of very thorough environmental checklists available at no cost online. These include:

Neighbourhoods for Life - Designing dementia-friendly outdoor environments –

Produced by Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development

This is aimed primarily at "designers, at all scales from urban design to street furniture, on the criteria to consider in developing dementia-friendly urban areas". But also has much of interest to those thinking about the outside environment at any level.
http://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingandDementia/Design/?parent=5091&child=6988

Dementia Design Checklist - Design checks for people with dementia in healthcare premises

Produced by NHS Scotland with the University of Stirling and DSDC Stirling

This is aimed at healthcare, facilities and is very thorough, but still has much of application to other indoor environments and those wanting to consider improvements on a smaller scale.
http://www.dementiashop.co.uk/products/dementia-design-checklist
Stirling University Dementia Services Development Centre produces a wide range of publications in the theme of design for dementia:
http://www.dementiashop.co.uk/taxonomy/term/11

Alzheimer's Australia NSW Dementia and Age- Friendly Outdoor Design Checklist

This is contained within Building Dementia and Age-Friendly Neighbourhoods, produced by Alzheimer's Australia NSW

It is a short checklist, some of which is quite localised in its priorities, but has much of relevance to those planning and designing new indoor and outdoor environments.

http://www.fightdementia.org.au/common/files/NSW/DementiaFriendlyNeighbourhoodsWebVersion.pdf

Checklist of Essential Features of Age-friendly Cities

Produced by the World health Organisation

Age-friendly environments have much in common with those for people with dementia. This is aimed at those working at a strategic level, and is intended as a tool for measuring dementia-friendliness across a wide variety of domains including housing and social inclusion.
http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Age_friendly_cities_checklist.pdf

Small changes can make a big difference in the internal environment.

The checklists above have much to offer those in a position to influence large-scale development, redevelopment or infill.

However, there are a number of changes that could be considered at much smaller scale and cost, especially in the indoor environment, that can have a major impact on improving accessibility for people with dementia:

Signage:
- Signs should be clear, in bold face with good contrast between text and background.
- There should be a contrast between the sign and the surface it is mounted on.
- Signs should be fixed to the doors they refer to – not on adjacent surfaces.
- Signs should be at eye level and well-lit.
- The use of highly stylized or abstract images or icons as representations on signage should be avoided.
- Think about placing signs at key decision points for someone who is trying to navigate your premises for the first time.
- Signs for toilets and Exits are particularly important.
- Ensure that glass doors are clearly marked.

Lighting:
- Entrances should be well-lit and makes as much use of natural light as possible
- Pools of bright light and deep shadows should be avoided.

Flooring
- Avoid highly reflective and slippery floor surfaces
- Changes in floor finish should be flush

Seating
- In larger premises – a seating area especially in areas where people are waiting can be a big help
- People with dementia prefer seating that looks like seating – so for example a wooden bench rather than an abstract metal Z-shaped bench.

Navigation
- Research shows that people with dementia use "landmarks" to navigate their way around, both inside and outside. The more attractive and interesting the landmark (which could be a painting, or a plant) the easier it is to use as a landmark.