**PRESS RELEASE for immediate issue:**

**Lilian Faithfull Care opens Gloucestershire’s first Dementia meeting centre**

Lilian Faithfull Care are opening their doors to support people newly diagnosed with Dementia in Gloucestershire. The first of this kind in the county and forms part of the ‘Meeting Centres UK Support Programme.’

Lilian Faithfull Care, with specialist knowledge of Dementia, are inviting people to the new meeting centre with their loved ones weekly on Wednesdays. Based in their Royal Gardens Community Hub, next to their Royal Court care home on Fiddlers Green Lane in Cheltenham.

Until now there wasn’t a service like this in Gloucestershire. The aim is to provide on-going support and advice to both the individual and their loved ones to help everyone adapt and live well with Dementia.

Lilian Faithfull Care’s trained Dementia team will provide a safe environment for people to spend the day. The visits will be flexible and equip people with useful information i.e. provide support with practical, emotional and social challenges, give one-to-one guidance and allow people to form new friendships for extra support.

There will be various activities designed to help adapt to the new daily challenges people encounter as well as being active and creative. Such as gardening, art, games, history, walking, dancing and outings.

The meeting centre is managed by both Yvonne Kelly-Fox and Georgina Kirby who work at Lilian Faithfull Care.

Georgina Kirby, Dementia Support Worker says, ‘We recognise the affect being told you have dementia has on people and their loved ones, and we are here to help.’

Yvonne Kelly-Fox, Dementia Link Support Worker says, ‘We welcome people to get in touch so we can support them through this journey and build their confidence out within the community.’

Inspired by the University of Worcester and The Association for Dementia Studies (ADS) who run a project to help establish new meeting centres in different parts of the UK to work with their communities to support people and families directly affected by dementia. According to the University of Worcester, Meeting Centres were first developed in the Netherlands 25 years ago and they now have 150 Dutch centres. Dutch research, and recent UK research, demonstrates that Meeting Centres have positive outcomes for people living with dementia and for family carers. Evidence shows people that attend experience better self-esteem, greater feeling of happiness and sense of belonging than those who don’t. Those who attended more regularly showed fewer of the more distressing symptoms of dementia. Family carers also experience less burden and feel better able to cope.

Martin Hughes, CEO of Lilian Faithfull Care says, ‘In Gloucestershire there is an estimated 8,610 people living with dementia and it is expected to double over the next 20 years. We remain true to our Founder, Lilian Faithfull’s principles, “a desire to improve the lives of others through care and dedication,” by helping people to live well with dementia in our county.’

Open weekly every Wednesday between 10.00am and 3.30pm, people can attend for as many weeks as they need, the expert team will be there with a friendly welcome and a helping hand.

This new weekly Wednesday meeting centre programme is in addition to the day care already provided by Lilian Faithfull Care at the Royal Gardens Community Hub.

If you would like to find out more, attend or refer someone to Lilian Faithfull Care’s Dementia meeting centre support programme please drop in on a Wednesday 10am-3:30pm, email at RGMC@lilianfaithfull.co.uk or visit [www.lilianfaithfull.co.uk/our-homes/meeting-center](https://www.lilianfaithfull.co.uk/our-homes/meeting-center/)

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**About Lilian Faithfull Care** - [**www.lilianfaithfull.co.uk**](http://www.lilianfaithfull.co.uk)

* Lilian Faithfull Care is a charity with over 70 years’ experience of providing care, support and a ‘home for life’ for the elderly in Gloucestershire.
* Caring for 300 residents across the group of five care homes, two day centres and the new meeting centre, and looked after by 450 staff.
* Providing a wide range of support to residents and guests, including the meeting centre programme, day care, respite, assisted living, residential and nursing care. With specialist knowledge of [dementia](https://www.lilianfaithfull.co.uk/our-care/dementia-care/) and [end of life care](https://www.lilianfaithfull.co.uk/our-care/end-of-life-care/).
* A charity in care for the right reasons, not for profit, with 96p in every £1 spent put towards the day to day care of residents and all that entails.
* The charity financially supports around 80 residents and subsidise resident’s fees to the amount of £1.5 million a year. This equates to around £18,750 per resident per annum.
* Through this subsidy and their ‘home for life’ pledge, they will never ask a resident to leave their group for financial reasons.
* Established in Cheltenham in 1946 by founder Lilian Faithfull and remaining true to the founding principles of our charity; a desire to improve the lives of others through care and dedication.