



“THERE’S A PRIDE FOR PEOPLE JOINING PEDALL, THEY’RE PART OF SOMETHING.” – A SUPPORT GROUP’S STORY

Group rides with PEDALL – New Forest Inclusive Cycling support carers and their loved ones to enjoy social and wellbeing benefits in the National Park.

“We call ourselves the Hampshire Forget-me-nots,” said Charity Lead for Dementia Friendly Hampshire, Jane Ward. “Dementia is something that binds us together, it’s not the reason we get together.

“We do that for the love of the outdoors and a love of what we’re doing. With PEDALL, it’s for a love of cycling.”

A former carer herself, Jane described riding with PEDALL as one of her favourite hours of the week. “People love it, as do I. I just adore it,” she said. “It’s different for different people, but I think our members all love just being out among the trees, seeing the

seasons, and enjoying the companionship they get.”

Jane spoke of ‘obvious benefits’ linked to riding with PEDALL, including cardiovascular health, improved appetite and sleep patterns thanks to exercising, as well as cognitive wellbeing boosts and those gained through increased Vitamin D.

“Exercise in green spaces is so powerful, and that’s before you add in the social elements and the interest,” she said. “It’s really quite special. People can talk about their cycling and share photos with their families.”



“THERE’S A PRIDE FOR PEOPLE IN BEING INVOLVED.”

Dementia Friendly Hampshire has been established for a decade, supporting people and their networks in their own communities, including those under 65 with young-onset dementia and people at various stages of their dementia journeys.

“It’s important to remember carers also often don’t have the same day-to-day opportunities to get out to exercise,” Jane pointed out. “So, it’s not just somebody with dementia who gets the benefits when riding with PEDALL, it’s the carer too.

“As a carer, you can feel an awful lot of guilt about whether you’re doing well – wondering ‘are you doing it right?’ or ‘are you doing enough?’. I think taking somebody out into the New Forest with PEDALL for a cycling session each week; that’s more than enough – it’s something special.

“Carers can relax and do something with their loved ones, something fun they can tell medical staff about that’s good for focus and health.”

“THAT TRUST AND THAT FEELING OF BEING PART OF SOMETHING – IT’S BELONGING.”

Jane continued: “We’ve got one gentleman who loves going out with various PEDALL volunteers, and his wife, she gets a bit of time on the Easyrider just to be on her own. There’s a couple who have fun together on the bike and we’ve had residents from a care home join us too.

“One chap really enjoys being able to tell the family that he’s doing something different, and the family is reacting tremendously. He’s very proud of what he’s doing and what he’s doing with his wife.”

Support from PEDALL’s volunteers and specialist fleet of bikes means new cyclists and people who used to ride but whose perception or balance has been impacted have opportunities to experience the Forest.

“It’s about the achievement and the trust members and carers have in staff,” Jane said. “That trust and that feeling of being part of something – it’s belonging. I think that’s really important to people.



“The PEDALL staff and volunteers are so good. They’re so friendly and are up for a laugh. We have a lot of giggles – belly laughs, actually. It’s magic, really.”

If you’d like to help more people experience the benefits PEDALL provides, please [support](#) or [donate](#).



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