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BUCKLAND HOSPITAL



Derelict houses at Randolph Road will be among those uses to create a dementia village

£3.5m has been secured to build dementia village

by Sam Lennon and Eleanor Perkins

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Funding for a dementia village in Dover has been secured.

East Kent Hospitals, Kent County Council and other agencies across east Kent and Europe have announced they will work together to create a dementia village on the site of the former Buckland Hospital, which closed in 2015.

The £3.5million project will enable people with the illness to lead healthier and more independent lives.

Significant European funding has been approved for the project, with £2 million being provided in cash by Interreg 2 Seas, with the rest match-funded by 10 partners, including East Kent Hospitals.

Interreg 2 Seas is a European Territorial Co-operation Programme covering England, France, the Netherlands and Belgium (Flanders). The programme is part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund and has a total of €241million to co-finance projects in the 2014 to 2020 period.

Work has been completed on the pre-planning application phase of the development, which will lead to a final design being submitted to Dover District Council.

Once approved it is anticipated that building work will start immediately and be concluded by spring 2019.

Chief executive of East Kent Hospitals, Matthew Kershaw, said: "This is an exciting development and represents a new approach in caring for those affected by dementia.

"Those with dementia often have other long-term health conditions, which can lead to them being repeatedly admitted to hospital. This may tackle specific bouts of illness, but it's a model that doesn't necessarily address the overall care needs – emotionally and physically – of an elderly person living with dementia.

PROJECT PARTNERS

- East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust
- The Health and Europe Centre
- Medway Community Healthcare CIC
- Canterbury Christ Church University
- ZorgSaam, Holland
- Emmaus Elderly Care, Belgium
- Flemish Expertise Centre on Dementia, Belgium
- Residential Care Holy Heart, Belgium
- HZ University of Applied Sciences, Holland
- University of Lille, France
- Observer Partners:
- La Vie Active, France
- Flemish Minister on Wellbeing, Public Health and Family Care, Zorgnet Icuuro, Belgium
- Flemish Agency Care and Health, Belgium
- Tourism Flanders, Belgium.

essarily address the overall care needs – emotionally and physically – of an elderly person living with dementia.

"The dementia village concept is based upon a social approach that encourages those with dementia to lead as normal a life as possible, engaging with a familiar environment while having access to care 24 hours a day."

When built, the Dover dementia village will be an enclosed site containing modified housing blocks, with each accommodating five residents with dementia.

It is anticipated that 30 people will be accommodated, with an additional six beds available for a new guesthouse with care concept. A separate building will provide community facilities and services.

The village will use Telehealth to help with monitoring residents' health, and technology to help make residents' daily lives easier.

Dementia presents a challenge to society, both now and increasingly in the future. In 2015 there were 850,000 people living with dementia in the UK and by 2025 it is estimated that this will have grown to nearly 1,150,000. Dementia now costs the UK economy £26.3 billion a year.

Mr Kershaw added: "We want to see people with demen-

tia retain their dignity, independence and health for as long as possible.

"New, financially sustainable methods of providing care for people living with dementia such as the dementia village will be vital in providing the excellent health and social care for those affected by dementia. We are looking forward to learning from this model and continuing to develop better treatment for people with dementia in the future."

Known officially as Community Areas of Sustainable Care and Dementia Excellence in Europe (CASCADE), the dementia village is part of a wider project that involves partners from the UK, the Netherlands, Belgium and France.

The dementia village will provide longer term and short-term respite care which will fully engage with the local community. The wider project will be the basis for passing shared learning and cross-border excellence in dementia care for the future.

Dover MP Charlie Elphicke said: "It's vital that we offer the best care possible to our elderly.

"The dementia village is a great idea and I'm pleased to see yet more investment in local care services."



Hopes for end arson attacks

The dementia village project will lead to the end of arson attacks in the area, a councillor hopes.

The new centre will mainly be built on the site of 12 disused houses in Randolph Road, which have been struck by firebugs three times since March.

Cllr Kevin Mills, district ward member for St Radigund's said: "If the developers can fully secure the site and there is a builder activity that might make it more difficult for people to set fires and put them off.

"There is still going to be a long time before the project is completed but it is good news that the funding has been achieved."

The homes were struck in March and April and on the worst occasion on August 18 when a blaze from the ground floor of a house went through the roof.

Cllr Mills has said that this has been part of wider problems of arson attacks on disused buildings in the ward.

A large fire was started in the former hospital site on July 3 where some of the dementia village will also be placed.

An old factory in Barwick Road has also been targeted.

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust owns the Randolph Road houses and says it has stepped up security since the last blaze.

There are now 24-hour patrols.

The houses were kept by the trust after the old hospital site was sold to Kent County Council and the replacement Buckland Hospital was opened in June 2015.

Cllr Mills said: "The people who carry out these arson attacks need to understand that every time they do it they take the fire service away from a fire where someone could be killed, as well as a road accident.

"But otherwise I am pleased that a dementia village will be built there as this is an illness that is becoming more and more prevalent. People who are as young as in their 40s can get it."



Cllr Kevin Mills