

Let's deal with dementia together!

If you are planning a day out with a loved one who has a dementia we have some helpful tips to make it an enjoyable experience.

Ask them first what they would like to do, take into consideration their interests and hobbies.

Planning is key ... consider things that will make the trip smoother, for example, what transport will be used, where will you park, is it accessible, will there be crowds/noise levels, the venue, purchasing tickets online in advance, comfort, queuing, catering available at the location and weather.

Go early ... those with a dementia can often feel fresher and more energised in the morning and early afternoon as opposed to the evening, consider a matinee as opposed to an evening show, and morning coffee or lunch instead of an evening meal.

Keep it simple ... a trip to the local park or coffee shop may be enough to begin with before planning day or overnight trips.

Don't be afraid to ask for help ... we all need a little help now and again! Ask venue staff for some assistance if it would help you both enjoy the trip - a coffee shop assistant if you would prefer a quieter area, or a warden for the best place to park. You may want to consider taking friends or family with you to enjoy the day. This would also be added support for you and the person with a dementia, and is also an opportunity to spend time together.

Allow some flexibility ... someone with a dementia may not always know how they are going to feel on any given day. Remember you may need a quiet, calm area for some 'time out' at some point. It may not work out for the date you have planned but it can be easily rearranged.

Capture the moment ... you may want to take the odd photo during the day. Many people with a dementia like to keep a diary or memory box so they can reflect on time spent with friends and family, it also offers a talking point when you visit the person of the positive experience of the day.