



Norfolk and Suffolk Health and Care Awards 2026

Treatment to Prevention Award

Shaftesbury Suffolk Memory and Dementia Support

Shaftesbury

Shaftesbury's Memory and Dementia Support Service is recognised for its successful launch across Suffolk in April 2025, delivering timely, person-centred support for people with memory concerns, dementia, and their carers. Implemented at pace, the team managed significant operational challenges, including staff training, new systems and a high volume of referrals—around 260 per month—while addressing an existing backlog. Despite this, they maintained a strong focus on providing compassionate, early support during an often overwhelming time. By prioritising early contact, particularly for the 46% awaiting memory assessment, the service has helped prevent individuals and families reaching crisis point.

A key achievement has been dramatically reducing waiting times from 4–5 months to under two weeks within a year, significantly improving access to early intervention. The team introduced a flexible, tiered model of care, ranging from immediate advice and signposting to in-depth holistic assessments and ongoing support. Importantly, individuals are not discharged but continue to access support as needed, ensuring continuity and reassurance as circumstances change.

Working collaboratively, the service has built partnerships with over 50 organisations and developed pathways for underserved groups, including those with younger onset dementia.

Now supporting over 3,000 people annually, the service has delivered measurable improvements in wellbeing, independence and carer resilience. Feedback highlights increased confidence, reduced isolation and better awareness of available support. By combining responsiveness, innovation and compassion, the team has transformed access to dementia support, enabling people to live well at home for longer.