



The Wishing Washing Line



An initiative created by Essex Friends and Neighbours (FaNs)

Welcome

Welcome and thank you for your interest in the [Wishing Washing Line](#) 'All you need to get started' pack. This resource has been designed for community members who have expressed an interest in creating their own line.

A creation of [My Home Life Essex community Friends and Neighbours Scheme](#), (FaNs Essex), the Wishing Washing Line helps connect older people living in care homes to their local communities. With huge successes across Essex, and now more recently with the support of My Home Life, the Wishing Washing Line has spread across the UK and is revolutionising the way in which care homes, their residents, relatives and staff connect with their local communities and vice versa.

FaNs Essex is the small and innovative charity responsible for creating the Wishing Washing Line. We are pleased to share our learning and ideas with you but we request you please acknowledge us as the creators of Wishing Washing Line by using the Essex FaNs logo (see appendix.1) or simply tagging us in your social media posts using the following hashtags; #makeeverymomentcount #wishingwashingline and tagging us by using @fansnetwork Using tags and links to the Essex FaNs website and pages will extend your reach and help you promote your local line to a national audience.

In order to get your Wishing Washing Line set up, we encourage you to read through this step by step guide which will help you with all you need to get started.

GOOD LUCK!

What is a Wishing Washing Line?

A Wishing Washing Line is a simple two-dimensional colourful display, normally located in a community space such as a Supermarket or community hub. The display takes the form of a garden scene with two washing lines hanging from each side of the board. Wishes of care home residents are hung on the line for members of the public to read and grant by making direct contact with the care home.

Why do we need a Wishing Washing Line?

The Wishing Washing Line was created to bring communities and care homes together. Care homes are sometimes described as 'Islands of the Old', disconnected from their local communities despite caring for some of the most vulnerable citizens in society. Social isolation can lead to mental health issues and 40% of residents in care homes are known to have some form of depression. This is further complicated by 80% of residents having some form of dementia and many being at the end of life. Encouraging communities to engage via their Wishing Washing Line to their local care homes should help to ease this situation.

Find your host

To gain maximum exposure your Wishing Washing Line will need to be hosted somewhere there is a large footfall, a local supermarket for example. Although you may choose another location to host your line. This can be anywhere from your local train station to a place of worship, or perhaps even your local community centre; wherever you think it'll get maximum exposure.

Making contact

When you've picked a great spot to hang your Wishing Washing Line, get in touch with the person who manages the space. For example, a supermarket may have a community engagement or social action lead who can help you get everything set up. Visit the location and the person in charge, by doing this in person you'll create stronger relationships.

How to get your host on board and secure a space

There are three easy steps to get you started, please don't be nervous, all you're going to do is talk about how wonderful the Wishing Washing Line is.

1. To help the host get excited about having a Wishing Washing Line, why not show them the overwhelming positive evidence collected by FaNs Network Essex on their Facebook page? (Appendix. 2)
2. A Wishing Washing Line will enable the host to demonstrate how they are meeting their core mission as supermarkets or businesses are likely to have commitments to their local communities.
3. Now agree a wall space to hang your line. It needs to be somewhere visible to the general public which is approximately 4 foot (1.2 meters) high by 6 foot (1.8 Meters) wide.

Cost and time

Good news! The Wishing Washing Line at its maximum should incur minimal costs (see appendix. 3 for full equipment) and it won't take too much time to set up.

TOP TIP

It's worth knowing that often supermarkets have an assigned budget for their local community. If you need one to two small things to get your Wishing Washing Line started, the supermarket may make a contribution from this fund.

Recruiting your local care settings

You might already have contacts for care homes you'd like to involve, if so get going!

If not, check out the Carehome.co.uk (Appendix. 4) website for information on which services are in your local area. Try to recruit not more than four or five care services to begin with.

TOP TIP

Start small! Some care homes are larger than others, don't invite too many services to take part until you're up and running and happy to expand. We suggest inviting four or five care homes to take part initially.

Important!

Please make sure the care homes you're choosing to take part in the Wishing Washing Line are in a 'state of readiness' to join in. This means the care service is stable enough to take part. For a Wishing Washing Line to work at its best it's important that the care service is offering its residents, relatives and staff a safe and happy environment to live, visit, and work in.

You might like to speak with your local authority about which care homes might be best to take part. You may also like to check the Care Quality Commission (CQC) website to see which care homes are located closest to the hosts of the Wishing Washing Line. Additionally, the CQC's website will tell you the care rating the home has received (see appendix. 5).

The key to working with care homes is...

Speak to the manager or activities co-ordinator of the home interested and get them on board. If they're unavailable ask for a more convenient time to call back (persist in getting hold of them, rather than speaking to someone else). When you do get hold of them, explain who you are and what you're hoping to achieve together. Perhaps mention that the Wishing Washing Line is a great and easy way for them to evidence to the CQC their responsibilities of providing meaningful activities and community engagement for their residents.

Care homes will want to know what their commitment might be (explained in the next section). After your call, follow up with a friendly letter or an email repeating the information discussed (keep it brief, they won't have time to read loads), add the facebook link and the FaNs Essex website as evidence of the Wishing Washing Line success.

TOP TIP

Remember to tell care homes this project is **FREE**.

Be appreciative that care settings are often extremely busy and distracting environments for staff and managers, persist in trying to get hold of a manager and keep the call short.

Be full of positivity about how the Wishing Washing Line would be a great opportunity for the home and its residents.

How might the care setting take part in the Wishing Washing Line?

The Wishing Washing Line works at its best when the care home asks residents what their wishes or interests might be. The wishes don't have to be grand or complicated but don't be put off by the seemingly impossible. FaNs has had some great success in linking residents with celebrities and even the Queen! However, often it's the 'little things' that matter most to us all, perhaps start small and work your way up to more challenging wishes?

Care homes need to collect their resident's wishes monthly at first, wishes can be sent through to the host more regularly when you're up and running. Care homes can send residents wishes by either emailing or posting them to their community broker, i.e. you, or directly to the host i.e. the supermarket or business. The host simply needs the first name of the resident, age and the detail of their wish, keep the writing to a minimum, the cards are small!

The Wishing Washing Line works well when the care homes use their activities co-ordinators as the lead for this project. If the service doesn't have a dedicated activities co-ordinator, then ask the care home manager if they can identify a member of staff who might be happy to become the champion and the contact for the Wishing Washing Line.

Care Homes must follow their own policies and procedures when inviting the public into their care setting. For advice and support around best practice contact your local safeguarding team.

Finally, the care homes must update you on wishes that have been fulfilled and inform the host of any changes in circumstances so redundant wishes can be removed from the line. We would encourage you to support the care home in sharing positive outcomes and stories collected from the Wishing Washing Line through social media or other platforms, (please comply with GDPR and safeguarding policies and procedure when sharing information and/or images of residents).

Hosts role and responsibilities

The host, i.e. the supermarket or business will be responsible for the initial creation of the Wishing Washing Line and its maintenance and upkeep. They will need to create the Wishing Washing Line and by cutting garments out, to hang onto the line. See below;



Or



Once the wishes have been received by the host, they can then be transcribed onto a piece of card and placed onto the Wishing Washing Line. Make sure the contact details of the care service are on the front of the card (this way members of the public can photograph the wishes and share them). Additionally write the date of when the wish was placed on the line, so you know when it was sent.

See below for examples of wishes;



Wishes shouldn't be left to stagnate, if you're not getting any luck in fulfilling a wish, take it off the line and add a new one, pop the unfulfilled wishes back onto the line a week later.

Top Tip

Staple the wishes to the line and cover the staple with a peg. This stops people from removing the wish permanently. Encourage people with smart phones to photograph and share them.

How do we launch the Wishing Washing Line?

Now you have your host secured, your care services involved and your new colourful washing line on the wall, we ask you to celebrate the launch of your Wishing Washing Line.

Why not have a grand opening! Invite your local dignitaries, local authorities, care service managers and activity co-ordinators/champions and their residents, members of the community, and importantly the local press. Your care home network will love nothing more than to feature in your local paper, and your supermarket, business or community hub will lap up the positive exposure

Appendix

Appendix. 1



Appendix. 2

Link to Facebook FaNs Network page <https://www.facebook.com/fansnetworkessex/>

Appendix. 3

- Clothes pegs
- A3 roll of blue paper
- A3 roll of green paper
- A4 mixed colour card (make sure there is a yellow sheet to cut out a sunshine)
- Scissors
- Stapler
- Felt tip pens
- String or ribbon for the wishing line

Appendix. 4

<https://www.carehome.co.uk/>

Appendix. 5

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/>

Top Tip

If you're intending on using Tesco, suggest they look at their internal intranet (Yammer) for evidence of other Tesco stores using the WWL successfully.