

Helen's story: Support to parent, Diagnosis/Living with dementia



- ◆ Helen is 36 and lives in Bristol with her husband Richard, and their two children, Hannah, 9, and Jack, 5. Helen teaches year 3 at her children's outer Bristol school, and Richard is a successful architect working in the centre of Bristol. In her (lacking) spare time, Helen enjoys food: cooking, trying new restaurants, and watching cookery programmes.
- ◆ Helen's father Malcolm, 76, was diagnosed with mixed Dementia (Alzheimer's and Vascular) just before Christmas 2013.
- ◆ Malcolm has lived alone in his Penzance cottage since the sudden death of his wife 15 years ago. He is fiercely independent and wishes to remain in the seaside community he has lived in all his life. Helen, being an only child and with her father over 100 miles away, is feeling helpless since her father was diagnosed, and wants him to move in with the family in Bristol, much to her husband's dismay.
- ◆ With work responsibilities and two children to care for, she is only able to visit her father every other weekend. She calls him when she can to remind him of his appointments, but her father is becoming increasingly irritated with her persistent interest in his health.
- ◆ Malcolm relies on his car to do his weekly shopping and to visit his local GP. Helen is having restless nights worrying about his ability to drive, but worries that her father will live off a diet of chips from the local chippy if she intervenes.