

Dementia in Scotland



**Alzheimer
Scotland**
Action on Dementia

Summer 2024 - Issue 108



Your voice
Your choice
Your future



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**DEMENTIA
AWARENESS
WEEK** 27 May
- 2 June



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Welcome

Welcome to the summer edition of Dementia in Scotland magazine.

We are delighted to share news and updates from our local areas as well as from some of our projects.

Our Kilmarnock Brain Health and Dementia Resource Centre has just celebrated its 10 year anniversary. Opened in 2014, the Centre has now been providing valuable local support, community groups and activities for a decade. You can read more on p6.

Also marking an important milestone, our Outdoor Dementia Resource Centre in Badaguish has now been open for over a year. This innovative Centre brings the therapeutic benefits of nature and the outdoors to people with dementia with a range of both indoor and outdoor activities. Find out more about the Centre on p13.

Each year, Dementia Awareness Week (DAW) aims to raise awareness and help improve the lives of people living with dementia, their carers and families. Our theme this year is 'Your voice, Your choice, Your future' and highlights the importance of person-centred care and the difference it can make to people's lives. A big thank you to Catherine, Margaret and Jean for being part of our campaign - you can read more on p10 and 11.

During Dementia Awareness Week (27 May - 2 June), our Long Term Care Commission will publish its report and key findings. Established in 2022, the Commission was set up to consider what needs to be done to deliver high quality long term care and support. You can read about the work of the Commission on p11.

Our Brain Health Scotland initiative was set up in 2020 with the mission of inspiring and empowering people to protect their brain health and reduce the risk of diseases that lead to dementia. On page 16 we take a look back at some of the work that has been done so far.

Finally, thank you to everyone who has supported our charity this year. From holding Tea & Blethers to taking part in adrenaline fuelled fundraising challenges, it is your support that helps us fund vital services like our 24 hour Freephone Dementia Helpline and our National Dementia Advisor Service. Thank you.



Henry Simmons

Henry Simmons, Chief Executive

We would like to hear your thoughts on Dementia in Scotland magazine. If you have any questions or comments, get in touch with the Editor, Caroline Russell, by email: crussell@alzscot.org



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Celebrating a decade of 'Mind that song'

Friday 14 March 2014 saw the very first 'Mind that Song' take place in Bearsden Cross Church. It was Minister Graeme Wilson, inspired by his prior involvement with a dementia singing group in Ayrshire who started the initiative. Since then, Mind that Song has grown into a much-loved monthly gathering, welcoming people living with dementia, carers and family members. Held every second Friday of the month at Bearsden Cross Church, the group features regular entertainment from Boclair Academy school, a good sing-along, and refreshments.

On 10 March 2024, a special celebration event was held to mark 10 years of Mind that Song, and event attendees enjoyed an afternoon of entertainment, reflection and camaraderie. A presentation was made to volunteer Bill Gardiner, who has generously donated his time each month over the last 10 years to help with the entertainment and sing-alongs but has sadly had to 'retire' this year. The hard work and commitment of the church volunteers was also recognised. The event included special guests such as MP Amy Callaghan who raised an Early Day Motion in Westminster Parliament in recognition of the group's success. Community Activities Organiser Anne O'Donnell was recognised in the Westminster Parliament motion for "her tireless work and dedication to the community".



Amy Callaghan MP, Anne O'Donnell and Minister Graeme Wilson

Anne has played a key role in Mind that Song over the years, she said:

"It was an honour and a privilege to receive this recognition in Parliament as an acknowledgement for the vital and much needed support that we provide across the East Dunbartonshire area. Since my own mother was diagnosed with dementia it has always been my passion to care for other people living with dementia and their families who are taking the same journey, and to support them in any way that I can."

Reflecting on the group's inception, Minister Graeme Wilson said, "Mind That Song has served our local community for 10 years now, providing socialisation and musical stimulation for those with dementia, their families, and carers. This group also provides a place for carers to gather together to provide mutual support. It's wonderful to see the difference music brings in people, and their smiles and the sparkle in their eyes."

We know that both music and singing can be powerful reminiscence tools, invoking memories and stories that give both comfort and stimulation to people living with dementia and groups like these play a vital part in local communities. Well done and thank you to everyone who has supported the group over the last 10 years, and we look forward to the next 10!

Thank you Barbara

We would like to say a huge thank you to West Dunbartonshire volunteer, Barbara Barnes who has supported us for almost 40 years – a wonderful contribution. Barbara, a retired primary school teacher, was awarded the British Empire Medal in 2013 in recognition of her charity work and is a former trustee on Alzheimer Scotland's Board. She still volunteers regularly, helping out at the Every Voice Choir rehearsals twice a month. We caught up with Barbara for a chat.

You've been volunteering with Alzheimer Scotland for almost 40 years – how did you first get involved?

My parents were living in Yorkshire when they were both diagnosed with dementia and so we brought them back to Scotland to live with us. This was in 1986. I didn't know much about dementia, so I got in touch with the Alzheimer Disease Society to find out more information. I joined a local carers group which another carer had set up and we would have regular meetings in a care home. When the Edinburgh branch of the Alzheimer Disease Society evolved to become Alzheimer Scotland, my involvement developed and over the years I have supported the charity with my volunteering as well as a period sitting on the Board of Trustees.

Why is volunteering important to you?

It's important that people with dementia are given the support they need. I also sit on my local council's dementia strategy group representing people with dementia and carers. There was so little support available back in the day and today we still have a long way to go in terms of things like respite care and other services.



*Barbara with son Gordon
Picture courtesy of Russell Smith*

You have done all sorts of adrenaline fuelled fundraising challenges for us including a recent abseil down the Falkirk Wheel at the age of 83 – what has been your highlight?

I have taken part in sky dives, abseiling, fire walks and zip slides, but my favourite was the wing walk I did for my 70th birthday! It was just wonderful flying over the fields and having people on the ground waving to me. I thoroughly enjoyed it.

What would you say to anyone who is thinking about volunteering?

I would tell them about the benefits that you get from it – that it's fun! Some of the activities I have been involved with over the years – music, dancing, the Choir, have been so enjoyable and it's making a difference to the lives of people with dementia. I would definitely encourage anyone thinking about it to give it a go.



Care & Repair workshop

Our Care & Repair workshop was delivered by The Glasgow School of Art Future Skills programme at our Brain Health & Dementia Resource Centre, Oxford Street, Glasgow. The workshop explored visible mending as an outlet for wellbeing and storytelling. An introduction to the history of mending followed a skill share session on basic techniques. Participants were encouraged to bring along their own personal damaged garments or home textiles to mend and tell their story and everyone attending received a lovely kit box with all the required tools. This workshop was open to carers and anyone living with dementia or experiencing difficulties with their memory.

We would like to thank the team at The Glasgow School of Art. We hope to have more workshops like this in the future. For more information please contact Centre Manager, Lorna Shand at lshand@alzscot.org

"I am now looking forward to taking some time out to sit and mend more of my clothes in the same way. I think it is also something I can share with my Mum as, although she can't see well enough to mend any more, she always takes an interest in this type of activity." – Workshop participant

Kilmarnock Brain Health and Dementia Resource Centre marks 10 year milestone

Our Centre at College Wynd, Kilmarnock officially opened its doors on 28 May 2014. At the time, it was estimated that there were just over 2,000 people with dementia living in East Ayrshire and it was projected over the next twenty years this number was set to double. The Centre aimed to become a vital local point of contact for the growing number of people with dementia in Kilmarnock and the surrounding areas, providing appropriate information and advice and promoting early diagnostic care and support. The Centre would also host a variety of community groups and activities and would have a drop in café facility.

The Kilmarnock Centre was officially opened by Provost Jim Todd of East Ayrshire Council who said, "The new Centre will be an incredible resource for people with dementia. It will make such a great difference to their quality of life and to their families and carers as well. People will be able to access support and information or speak to a Dementia Advisor as well as take part in a wide range of activities all under one roof."



Henry Simmons, Chief Executive of Alzheimer Scotland added

"Our new Dementia Resource Centre in Kilmarnock will be a strong community hub offering information, advice, practical support and a wonderful, welcoming space for people living with dementia – both in the town and across Ayrshire. Having this dedicated Centre will allow staff to develop more groups and supports to help ensure that people with dementia and their carers receive the level of support that they need."

Over the years, the Centre has gone from strength to strength, offering therapeutic activities to help support people living with dementia and their carers. People have been able to access the support and information from our Dementia Advisors and feedback has been extremely positive.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had a huge impact on all the people we supported, and the Centre had to rapidly transform services to be able to meet the changing needs. iPads were distributed, via government funding, to enable us to have online groups which had quizzes, live music and art sessions. In March 2022, the Centre re-opened, and we rebuilt the services around what had historically happened. We contacted our local Carer Centre, health and social care partnership, NHS and devised a new programme around the needs of the people we support. We networked with other organisations and are pleased to have support from a wide variety of local businesses. Today our footfall is over 500 people per month.



As we move into our second decade, we are excited to expand our service to offer information on brain health and we are spreading our Brain Health Scotland messaging with the objective of reducing the incidence of dementia over the next 10 years. Many factors affect the health of your brain, some we can't control but others we can influence by making positive lifestyle changes. Sheena Boyd, Centre Manager commented,

"The ethos of Alzheimer Scotland continues to be that nobody faces dementia alone, our staff and volunteers continue to offer a warm welcome, help and advice along with fantastic therapeutic groups. We are grateful to receive such fantastic feedback from the people we support ensuring they feel cared for and listened to. I am delighted that the vision from our Chief Executive 10 years ago has been achieved and we will continue to strive to support the people of East Ayrshire to the best of all our ability."



A day in the life of a Dementia Advisor



We met up with Jeni, one of our Dementia Advisors, to have a chat about her role. Jeni has been with Alzheimer Scotland for almost seven years, having worked in employability, and as a volunteer in the housing sector.

? What made you want to embark on a career in dementia care?

In a previous role, I was a volunteer coordinator for a housing association. I always enjoyed meeting tenants, some of whom were living with a dementia diagnosis. The interactions we shared were always so positive and I built some great connections. So, when the opportunity arose to apply for the post of Dementia Advisor with Alzheimer Scotland, I felt it was the perfect fit.

? Tell us about your role as a Dementia Advisor – how would you describe it to someone?

My role is very diverse; not least because my week is split between providing face-to-face support, and remotely responding to requests that come in through our National Dementia Advisor Service. For half of the week, I cover the Dundee locality, where I'm out and about facilitating a range of initiatives such as our 'D-Café's Carer Support', and a wonderful event called BOOGIE, which is always a highlight of the month. We invite people with dementia to come together with their families and carers in a local bowling club for an afternoon of music, dancing, and laughter. We book a DJ who is kept busy accepting requests – the atmosphere is always wonderful – I'd love to bottle it! I also schedule time to meet people on a one to one basis to provide more specific help and support. The rest of the week is spent responding to queries that come to us via the National Dementia Advisor Service. When the phone rings, I have no idea what to expect – it could be a question relating specifically to dementia, or in-depth legal and financial issues. It means I'm constantly learning, which although can be a challenge, is also very fulfilling.

? What does a typical 'day in the life of Jeni' look like?

It's fair to say there is no typical day! When working in the locality, you'll find me preparing for, setting up and hosting events, making sure I have any new information ready to share including details of what's on for the month ahead. Scheduled one to one meetings also account for some of my day, as well as catching up with any phone calls or emails. On the days I'm assigned to the National Dementia Advisor Service, I might need some desk time to research specific topics before responding to a query. Depending on the help required, I can also sometimes spend an hour on a call – it's great to be able to offer that level of flexibility and tailored support.

? What do you like most about your job?

I love the variety – it's so diverse. Locality work is great as I can build up strong rapport with families and other organisations, which is very rewarding. And when I'm focused on National Dementia Advisor Service calls, I feel fortunate to be part of such a cohesive team. We all care about the service we offer and are passionate about supporting people in the right way. If I'm ever unsure, I know there's always someone there who can steer me in the right direction – and vice versa. Having such a robust support network means that we really can walk alongside those who need our help. It's certainly never dull, but it is one of the most supportive teams I've ever been part of. I also really love our BOOGIE afternoons because they're always such a boost. But best of all, it's always so reassuring when someone gets back in touch to let me know how they got on with something I offered guidance on, and when people tell me they feel lighter for having spoken with me, it gives a real sense of satisfaction and makes everything worthwhile.

? Do you have a personal mantra?

The adage 'treat people as you want to be treated' is always at the forefront of my mind when I represent Alzheimer Scotland. Being respectful and empathetic is so important, especially when people are experiencing a difficult time – it really can be a lifeline for someone.

Spotlight on Alzheimer Scotland's day opportunities

Alzheimer Scotland's day services and day opportunities specialise in supporting people with dementia through therapeutic activities. They help people to maintain their skills so they can stay independent for as long as possible. Our day care is highly respected by other providers as well as the Care Inspectorate and seen as an example of good practice, and we have made some changes to our day care services to ensure they are delivered in a truly person centred and highly therapeutic way:

- shorter sessions for smaller numbers of people
- a whole team approach using the collective knowledge our colleagues have of the people they support and the strong and mutually trusting relationships to support session planning in a truly person-centred way
- connecting people with dementia with others who share their interests
- activities that are planned and based on individual interests supporting person-centred session planning

Our day opportunities are not always buildings based. We develop partnerships with local organisations and businesses, and this provides opportunities for visits to help people with dementia achieve positive outcomes. Our day services and day opportunities offer a wide range of activities, including life story work, exercise to music, musical activities, reminiscence and outdoor activities.



Edinburgh Young Onset Group at the Kelpies

Our starting point is the person living with dementia and how best to engage them in the things that matter most to them, both from their past and their present. So if talking about days on the football pitch or schooldays gives the person a sense of pride or generates happy memories for them, that's what we'll start with.

Maintaining social and community connections provides cognitive stimulation that can help maintain brain health in people living with dementia, mild cognitive impairment, or those most at risk of developing dementia. New research also shows that modifying risk factors such as managing depression, diabetes, obesity, and managing hearing loss can help delay or prevent the symptoms of dementia. A developing body of evidence reinforces the belief that regular exercise, particularly strength and balance training, reduces falls and partially reverses or slows progression of frailty. Poor nutritional intake is also an important modifiable risk factor for frailty and falls and is highly influenced by poverty, food insecurity and social isolation.

Intergenerational work



Edinburgh Young Onset Group gardening

Carers can also benefit from time to themselves while the person they care for enjoys the activity. Some of our Centres also offer sessions in the evenings or at weekends. We have learnt that this model is successful because it is truly person-centred. The approach taken by our teams allows us to meet the person with dementia's emotional, social and practical needs and make people with dementia, their carers and families more comfortable and confident in our service and build mutual respect.

Alzheimer Scotland has built a model of day care and blended support that focuses on delivering positive outcomes and offering more options for choice and flexibility. The success of this model is due to working in a collaborative way with our partners. We will continue to have meaningful conversations with the Care Inspectorate, our commissioners and most importantly people with dementia and their families.

Contact info@alzscot.org for more information.

Active Voice update

In April, Active Voice Development Officer Norman Williamson travelled to Krakow in Poland for the Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI) conference. Here, he tells us how it went.

The active voice of people with dementia and carers is at the heart of Alzheimer Scotland's work. As an Active Voice Development Officer, I am privileged to work alongside people with lived experience. My role supports the work of the Scottish Dementia Working Group (SDWG) and the National Dementia Carers Action Network (NDCAN), both national, member-led campaigning and awareness raising groups.

Last month, I was delighted to accompany NDCAN member, Joanna Boddy, to Krakow, Poland for Alzheimer's Disease International's 36th Global Conference. With over 1000 delegates from more than 120 countries, the theme 'Dementia: Insights, Innovations, Inspirations,' focused on aspects of the World Health Organisation's Global action plan on dementia.

Flying the flag for SDWG and NDCAN, we were proud to not only attend, but also to give an oral presentation and display a poster for the duration of the three-day event.



'Every Story Matters'

The title of our oral presentation, 'Every Story Matters' was informed by the words of Professor Tom Kitwood who famously said, *"when you have met one person with dementia, you have met one person with dementia."*

This encapsulates our belief that no two people are affected by dementia in the same way – everyone's experience is unique. We began by highlighting that while stereotypical depictions of dementia have historically been negative, SDWG and NDCAN work to counter this by sharing a narrative that reflects personal, lived experiences. We believe that by humanising stories, they become real and have the power to resonate with audiences more impactfully. Explaining that members frequently share their experiences in forums such as conferences, webinars and even TV and radio appearances, we were able to emphasise our belief that sharing stories has the power to drive positive change by encouraging decision makers to listen and act.

We read poignant excerpts from the personal stories of absent SDWG and NDCAN members – culminating in Joanna's reflections of her own experience as a carer for her mum, Vera. Joanna, an NDCAN member for eight years, outlined her intention to continue sharing her story far and wide to ensure that carers' needs are recognised. She said, "I was a daughter first and didn't think of myself as a carer for a long time – like many carers. This can mean our voices are often not heard, or our needs recognised. As part of NDCAN, I campaign to make sure they are, and that we are valued and seen as equal partners in care."



'Coffee with a Cop'

To showcase the positive relationship SDWG and NDCAN are building with Police Scotland, our poster presentation reflected an important collaborative event, 'Coffee with a Cop'. This brought group members, and others affected by dementia, together with community police officers to discuss relevant issues. It was mutually beneficial – with attendees seeing the police as approachable and supportive, while providing a platform to raise awareness of dementia and discuss joint initiatives that help people live safely with the condition.

Reflections

Being able to share the mission of Alzheimer Scotland and the voice of lived experience on an international stage was the highlight of the conference. But importantly, it also provided an invaluable opportunity to network and learn from so many like-minded people. We were proud to represent Alzheimer Scotland, and to share our knowledge in the field of dementia prevention, care, and research. We look forward to sharing more of our innovative practice at the next ADI Conference in France 2026.

To find out more about the work of our **Active Voice groups**, visit:
www.alzscot.org/sdwg
www.alzscot.org/ndcan

Dementia Awareness Week 2024

Each year, Dementia Awareness Week (DAW) is held with the aim of raising awareness of dementia and helping improve the lives of people with dementia, their families and carers. This year, our theme is: *Your voice, Your choice, Your future.*

Each person living with dementia has their own unique story, and their needs, preferences and aspirations are as diverse as they are. At Alzheimer Scotland, we advocate for a care approach that enables people with dementia to live as well as they can for as long as they can. We care about your care. We believe that good care respects and embraces diversity, giving people the power and control to make choices that reflect who they are and what matters most to them – now and in the future. Good care looks different for everyone, and the best care is one that is tailored to the individual – your voice, your choice and your future.



**DEMENTIA
AWARENESS
WEEK** 27 May
- 2 June

*Your voice
Your choice
Your future*

We met up with three amazing people who are living with dementia to film them sharing their stories and telling us what is important to them when it comes to their care and what living well means to them.

All of our films and stories will be available on our website throughout Dementia Awareness Week and beyond at www.alzscot.org/DAW24

Catherine

Catherine is 75 and lives in Lochgilphead. She has a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. In 1998 Catherine founded the Dochas Carers Centre with her husband John who had Motor Neurone Disease.



The centre functions as both a gallery for local artists and a support centre for carers. Catherine is a retired music teacher and is currently a member of the Lochgilphead Forget-Me-Not Memory Choir. Below, she explains how music helps her live well.

"Music is my therapy, it is my therapist. It calms me down when I am feeling agitated. It gives me the opportunity to express myself. That was why I formed the choir and we have a laugh. It's amazing to be part of a group, belonging to something, to people, to friends who look out for you when you need them."

Margaret

Margaret is 59 and lives in Glasgow. She was diagnosed at the age of 51 with frontotemporal dementia. Margaret is a member of the Scottish Dementia Working Group (SDWG) and is passionate about campaigning, raising awareness and sharing her experience of being a younger person with dementia. Below, Margaret speaks about the support she gets from her local Dementia Resource Centre.

"It was thanks to my consultant that I heard about Alzheimer Scotland's resource centre at Bridgeton. I'm so grateful for being able to go to there, and I was given a link worker who's been really helpful. I love going to the Alzheimer Scotland café and was so pleasantly surprised at the supportive environment. No one is sitting around talking about the type of dementia they have – they were just enjoying being together."





Our Fair Dementia Care Campaign

Alzheimer Scotland’s Fair Dementia Care Campaign continues to challenge the unfair charges faced by people living with dementia with complex physical and psychological symptoms which require specialist health and nursing care. People with advanced dementia living in Scotland’s care homes do not have equality of access to the health care they need. Fair Dementia Care is about ensuring that those with advanced dementia receive free health and nursing care on a par with those with other progressive and terminal illness.

Long Term Care Commission

Our Long Term Care Commission was set up in 2022 to consider alternative approaches to delivering more effective methods of long term care and support. The Commission is Chaired by former First Minister Henry McLeish and includes members of our two Active Voice groups – the Scottish Dementia Working Group (SDWG) and the National Dementia Carers Action network (NDCAN) who add the voice of personal experience. Members of the Commission have met regularly over the last two years to establish a set of national recommendations for Scottish Government and other stakeholders which set out a new, fairer, more person-centred and sustainable policy, practice, and funding model for the long term care of older people and people with dementia in Scotland. The Commission’s report and key recommendations will be published at the end of May 2024 and will be available on our website

www.alzscot.org



Jean

Jean is 68 and has vascular dementia. After living in the east end of Glasgow all her life she has recently moved into her flat at Croftspar Place. Being at Croftspar means that Jean can maintain her independence while her family has peace of mind. Her family live close by and pop in to visit Jean often. Below, Jean talks about how she felt moving into her Croftspar flat.

“As soon as I came here I knew this is for me. I’m settling in here no bother. The people are nice to you, the staff are good to you, and I feel really safe here.”



What is Croftspar Place?

Croftspar Place is a supported accommodation service based in Springboig, Glasgow for people with dementia. It comprises eight single storey, unfurnished flats. Alzheimer Scotland provides a housing support and care at home service to Croftspar Place tenants.



Alzheimer Scotland's Annual Conference 2024

Our Annual Conference is always a great opportunity to bring together people with dementia, carers, health and social care professionals and researchers. It's a chance to network, meet up with old friends and hear from a variety of speakers on a variety of engaging topics.

This year's conference will be held on Friday 20 September at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre (EICC). As always, tickets for people with dementia and carers are free and you can find out how to register on our website at www.alzscot.org/conference24. More details of the conference, including the full programme will be made available on our website closer to the event.



20 September



Alzheimer Scotland
Annual Conference 2024

Conference webinar series

Last year, following on from our Annual Conference, we held a series of webinars on a range of subjects. These proved very popular and this year we will once again be holding a webinar series after our conference.

You can register your interest in our webinar series on our website here:

www.alzscot.org/conference24



Tea & Blether

A huge thank you to everyone who is holding a Tea & Blether during this year's Dementia Awareness Week. Whether it's a coffee morning, afternoon tea or a bake sale - at home, work or in your local community, your Tea & Blether will help to change the lives of people with dementia and those who care for them.



Dementia Dog and the Stone of Destiny

Representatives from the Dementia Dog project were honoured to be invited to a special ceremony to mark the departure of the Stone of Destiny from Edinburgh Castle to its final resting place at the new museum in Perth. Veryan, part of the Dementia Dog family along with the handsome Roly and former Dementia Dog Project Coordinator Nadia (pictured) led the people's procession behind the Scottish First Minister.

The Outdoor Dementia Resource Centre – one year on

April 2023 saw the official opening of the UK's first outdoor Dementia Resource Centre in Badaguish, Aviemore and since then the Centre has welcomed hundreds of people who are living with dementia, their families, and carers.

Set within the spectacular Cairngorms National Park, this pioneering project received development phase funding as part of the Cairngorms 2030 programme, supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund. Earlier this year it was confirmed that funding would continue through to 2028 for the delivery phase of the project. Since its launch, this unique Alzheimer Scotland Centre has enabled people to enjoy the many benefits of 'green health' opportunities, which although are important for everyone, are especially advantageous for people who are living with dementia.

Nestled within a wonderful outdoor space, the Centre, owned by Speyside Trust, has quickly become a bustling hub for a wide range of nature-inspired pastimes such as walking, cycling, gardening, art, and willow weaving. In the 18 months to February of this year, more than 700 people had already benefited from over 150 different groups and activities on offer. The Centre offers the chance for people to spend time in the great outdoors, increasing their physical and mental wellbeing in many ways. It's a social experience too, giving people the opportunity to connect with friends and family in a relaxed and easy environment.

Not all activities take place out in the open though, which is handy during our long Scottish winters! The team has created a schedule of events that aren't weather-dependent – allowing people to enjoy the Centre all year round, but also offering the chance to come along to outreach sessions delivered in local community centres. Innovative indoor activities such as Cognitive Stimulation Therapy, a nature themed 'Bringing the Outdoors In' programme delivered in partnership with Highland Wildlife Park, and even Gaelic language learning has kept the team busy during the colder months.

Since opening, the Centre has also received 75 enquiries from people looking to find out more about our services – coming from as far afield as Germany and the United States. This is testament to the positive impact being felt by local people who are affected by dementia – as one participant, John, says, "This is a wonderful, restful place". Looking ahead to the summer months, staff at the Centre will continue with a packed schedule of activities, ranging from cycling sessions, nature education, basket-making and outdoor music therapy. Anyone living with dementia, their families and carers are welcome to participate and can self-refer, making access a quick and easy process.



Centre Co-ordinator Kenny Wright said,

"I am delighted that funding has been secured until at least 2028. This will have a profound impact on people who are living with dementia, and their families. Badaguish is a thriving Centre, where people can access a wide range of nature-based therapeutics and try out new, interesting activities. During a recent cycling session, one participant told me, "this has changed my life – I can ride a bike again!" I think that sums up the success of the project."



Cairngorms
National Park Authority
Ùghdarras Pàirc Nàiseanta a'
Mhonaigh Ruaidh



You can learn more about the Centre's programme of green health activities and how to get involved at www.alzscot.org/odrc

Scotland's Memory Walk 2024

– join us in Inverness, Edinburgh, Dundee or Glasgow

Alzheimer Scotland is delighted to announce the return of Memory Walk for 2024. With four brand new in-person events to offer this year. We are excited to see you all throughout the month of September.

Taking part in Scotland's Memory Walk is simple. Sign up online – tickets are just £10 for adults and free for children. It's quick and easy to set up your sponsorship page, which you can then share with family, friends and colleagues. Every penny you raise will help people with dementia and their carers, as well as supporting better brain health for everyone in Scotland.

Walk with us in Inverness, Edinburgh, Dundee or Glasgow – it's set to be a fun-filled family day out. We can't wait to walk with everyone, in our purple t-shirts, to come together to celebrate loved ones and raise vital funds. See you in September!

Scotland's Memory Walk 2024 will take place at the following locations:

September

Sunday 1 – Inverness

Queens Park Athletics Track,
Bught Park,
Inverness, IV3 5SS

Sunday 8 – Edinburgh

Meadowbank Stadium,
London Road,
Edinburgh EH7 6AE

Sunday 15 – Dundee

Ronnie McIntosh Stadium,
Mains Loan,
Dundee DD4 9BX

Sunday 29 – Glasgow

Crownpoint Sports Complex,
183 Crownpoint Road,
Glasgow G40 2AL



Sign up at
memorywalk.alzscot.org

Every penny raised in Scotland,
stays in Scotland

If you prefer, you can also do your own Memory Walk during September and choose a route that has a special meaning for you.



Brodies charity partnership



In 2020, Scottish law firm, Brodies, selected Alzheimer Scotland as their charity partner. Over the last four years the relationship has been hugely successful, with an incredible £130,000 donated to date. Brodies immediately galvanised support, with lots of their colleagues committing to undertake fundraising activity – the first of which saw people ‘logging miles’ over a week, with Brodies donating 50p per mile. From then, the firm embraced Alzheimer Scotland and Brain Health Scotland initiatives that inform people about what it is like to live with dementia, and how we can protect our brain health. We delivered 12 ‘Dementia Friends’ sessions to staff, equipping them with important knowledge to carry forward.

Brodies also supported our ‘My Amazing Brain: STARS’ programme, an evidence-based campaign that empowers children to keep their brain healthy. A generous donation enabled us to develop a suite of lessons, activities, and resources – allowing us to reach 270 schools and over 13,000 children so far. We were also invited to join forces with Brodies for their ‘Tennis Invitational’ in September 2023, in conjunction with Judy Murray, who delivered a wonderful session at our dementia café in Edinburgh. A workshop series was also delivered in local schools to encourage participation in sport as a way of safeguarding brain health.

Specialist lawyers provided invaluable information to families affected by dementia, such as advice on creating a will and power of attorney. Further, ‘Ask the Expert’ sessions saw legal specialists and Dementia Advisors coming together to answer queries and signpost to local support services.

Fundraising support is vital for Alzheimer Scotland and the passion and persistence shown by Brodies’ colleagues in this regard has been incredible. Jennifer Guy took on the remarkable challenge of scaling Mount Kilimanjaro, followed by a brave bunch who conquered Ben Nevis, Mount Snowdon, and Scafell Pike – all within 24 hours. Our partnership ended in April this year, but we would like to say a huge thank you to Brodies and their colleagues for the support they have given us.

For the years to come, we are delighted to be working with the Alzheimer’s Society to deliver partnerships with CBRE, the global leader in commercial real estate, EDF who power over 3.7 million homes across the UK and with builders’ merchants, Travis Perkins. Partnerships like these offer us not only a huge opportunity to reach more people who are living with dementia or caring for someone who is, but also a tremendous pool of volunteers and supporters who give their time and money to help us deliver our support.



Solo art exhibition ‘Jist John’

We are always inspired by the innovative initiatives and activities from our community fundraisers. This includes the solo art exhibition ‘Jist John’ by artist John Sangster that was shown at The Studio, Monymusk last year. John started painting with Margaret Delday, an artist based at The Studio Monymusk after being diagnosed with Lewy body dementia. He has gradually lost his ability to read and write but can still paint and has been helped by all the artists at The Studio.

Jackie Cumberburch, John’s wife, said: “The regular painting sessions in the calm, encouraging atmosphere of The Studio has benefited John greatly. John has been involved in all aspects of putting this exhibition together.”

John said: “Painting is freedom! Painting is fun! When I am painting, I really get to express myself. My work is based on my imagination, and it is only when the piece of work is completed that I get the final enjoyment of naming it. I have benefited from having this goal with support from my friends.”

All proceeds from John’s exhibition went to Alzheimer Scotland. Thank you to John and Jackie for your support.



Brain health update



There are many things we can do throughout life to protect the health of our brain – by taking steps to safeguard its health today, we could be preventing dementia in the future.

In 2018, our Chief Executive Henry Simmons and Professor Craig Ritchie met with the First Minister Nicola Sturgeon to discuss new and emerging possibilities for dementia prevention. This was the start of an exciting and innovative movement towards the development of Brain Health Scotland and dementia prevention in Scotland. Soon after this meeting the concept and vision of Brain Health Scotland was born. With core funding from the Scottish Government combined with contributions from Alzheimer Scotland, the journey to turn concept to reality commenced and Brain Health Scotland was formally launched in April 2020.

The goal of Brain Health Scotland is to promote lifelong brain health and create a legacy of long term dementia prevention strategies.

By reaching out as early as possible into our schools and wider communities we can actively engage with the public and target people known to be at risk of brain disorders.

There are some pre-determined aspects such as age and genetic characteristics that may put us at increased risk, but there are many steps we can take to safeguard our brain health and delay or prevent some kinds of dementia. These are known as modifiable risks.

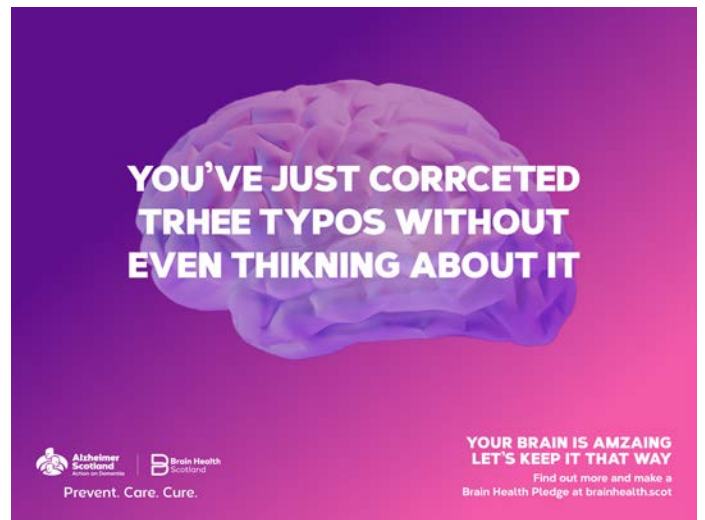
At Brain Health Scotland our mission is to empower everyone in Scotland to protect their brain health and reduce their risk of diseases that lead to dementia. We work with all ages, across the whole of Scotland, to increase awareness and provide support to protect their brain and the amazing part of who they are.

The Brain Health Scotland team immediately began working on a solution that could help each of us understand more about our own brain and how we can protect it. The result was an engaging interactive tool called 'My Brain Health Plan', launched in March 2022, and designed to provide personalised advice on how to keep our brain healthier for longer. Taking the form of an online quiz, it guides users through a set of questions about their life and routine, producing evidence-based suggestions and tips that are tailored to personal circumstances. Focusing on six areas of daily life – exercise, nutrition, socialising, smoking and alcohol consumption, sleep, and the management of other medical conditions – the resulting recommendations can be used to set 'Brain Pledges' or, in other words, personal commitments to make positive changes.

Since then, Brain Health Scotland has reached more important milestones – autumn 2022 saw the launch of the landmark 'My Amazing Brain: STARS' schools programme. This is an evidence based campaign that empowers children to develop healthy habits early in life. The premise is that there are as many connections between brain cells as there are stars in the galaxy. Through animations and activities, children imagine their brain as being full of stars and learn that healthy habits like social activity, eating nutritious food, sleeping well, finding time to relax, and being careful with head safety will help keep their brain healthy. The programme provides free resources for educators of 8–12 year olds, offering wonderful learning opportunities to be enjoyed in the classroom and at home. Such is the success of 'My Amazing Brain', it was shortlisted as a Campaign of the Year finalist in the Scottish Charity Awards 2023, going on to receive a 'Highly Commended' award.

“The STARS programme is about inspiring young people to find out what they can do to keep their brains in peak condition and helping them set up good habits early in life.”

Last summer, a sports-focused campaign turned attention to sports enthusiasts. Backed by football legend and Alzheimer Scotland ambassador Mark Hately, The Scottish Football Association, Scottish Rugby Union and SportScotland, the 'SPORT in Mind' movement urges sports followers to reduce their risk of dementia by following the SPORT acronym – 'Socialise, Protect, Optimise, Rest and Train.' This acts as a reminder of the importance of maintaining friendships, keeping brains injury-free, eating healthily, taking time to relax, and staying fit and active – lifestyle decisions that help keep brains in peak condition.



Later in 2023, we heralded the opening of a new Brain Health Service and Clinic within our Brain health and Dementia Resource Centre in Aberdeen. A multi-agency project between Scottish Government, NHS Grampian, and Alzheimer Scotland, this dedicated space enables people to recognise their personal risk of diseases that can lead to dementia. At the Brain Health Service, support is offered to anyone, regardless of age, who might have concerns about their memory or brain health or wish to find out more about prevention. The Brain Health Clinic is a referral-based system and is delivered by an NHS Clinical Nurse Specialist for Brain Health and a Consultant Psychiatrist. Everyone who visits the Clinic is provided with an action plan to carry forward positive steps to maintain brain health.

Brain Awareness Week is a global campaign to encourage public enthusiasm and support for brain science. It's a great opportunity to spread our key messaging around prevention and share some of the practical ways people can look after their brain health. For Brain Awareness Week 2024, our campaign had the theme of 'never too early, never too late'. We made some short films that featured both members of the Scottish Dementia Working Group (SDWG) and school children talking about some of the ways they take care of their brain.

We look forward to continuing our vital Brain Health Scotland work in 2024 and beyond. You can find out more about brain health at www.brainhealth.scot

Membership update

As a valued Member of Alzheimer Scotland, we wanted to let you know that we will be reviewing our membership structure, and we would like to make a few small changes to the way your membership is administered in the charity. This will give you the choice to make sure your membership is right for you. We are keen to ensure that Members are aware of the legal duties and responsibilities of membership, and we want to give you a choice of the level of responsibility that you have in our charity. We will be writing to all of our Members to advise of these changes.



We greatly appreciate each and every Member of Alzheimer Scotland. Without your ongoing support, we would not have been able to achieve the successes in support provision and campaigning efforts, that we see today. Together we are making sure nobody faces dementia alone.

Update on our National Dementia Advisor Service

Launched on World Alzheimer's Day 2023, our National Dementia Advisor Service has been providing invaluable support to people with dementia, their families and carers over the last eight months. The service, which is completely funded by Alzheimer Scotland through donations and fundraised income can help with a wide range of issues such as accessing health and social care support, help with complaints, power of attorney, guardianship, and money and legal matters.



National Dementia Advisor Service

21 September 2023 – 31 March 2024

1,268 referrals:

64% Calls
26% Emails
10% Walk-ins to our Centres



Who is contacting NDAS:



Carer/relative/friend 84%
Person with dementia 2.5%
Health service 3%
Voluntary sector 2.5%
Other professionals 8%

Why people contact NDAS:

Carer stress/support
Difficulty sourcing services
Information on services
Dementia information
Emotional support





National Dementia Advisor Service

The National Dementia Advisor Service provides a responsive, high quality information, advice and advocacy service relating to all aspects of brain health and dementia. Our National Dementia Advisor Service complements our existing National Support Services such as our 24 hour Freephone Dementia Helpline and our National Counselling Service.



Call us on:

0300 373 5774

(Charged at a local call rate)

Lines open: Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm



Email us at:

NDAS@alzscot.org



You can find further information about the service on our dedicated web page

www.alzscot.org/ndas



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DEMENTIA AWARENESS WEEK

Show your support for people living
with dementia now and in the future

Get involved

Find out more: www.alzscot.org/DAW2024

#DementiaAwareness



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