

# Western Isles Services NEWSLETTER

Summer 2024



**Alzheimer  
Scotland**  
Action on Dementia

**First and Foremost**, Hello and Welcome to the first issue of the relaunched newsletter! I hope you enjoy reading and catching up on all the latest goings on here in the Western Isles Service from the whole team.

It's been a busy few year for the team while they safely navigated out of lockdown, introduced new staff members to the team and finally moved premises into Taigh Shiphoirt (new care home) where both the Office, Dementia Resource Centre, and Solas (Registered Daycare Service) now operate under one roof.

I have been so honoured to have been given the opportunity to lead the team here, since March 2023, through some of these latest changes and to help continue the work in supporting those living with dementia, their carers and loved ones across the Western Isles.

It's been a very quick first year in post, and I am very proud of what we have achieved so far, and I am excited to see what the future will hold for the service.

**CATRIONA MACRITCHIE**

**Commissioned Service Lead**



## THE BIG MOVE

Last summer we bid a fond farewell to our old premises on Bells Roads and Grianan having been there for many years. This was a very bittersweet moment for the team who have spent many happy years serving the local community and creating happy, treasured memories from there. Reflecting on these times Maureen Macleod (Daycare Organiser) said

***"...Our day centre shut in west view terrace for 2 weeks to allow the move over to our new premises which we all had mixed feelings about but we all settled in very quickly and all those we support felt very much at home in the new space and commented how much space there is and how nice and bright it is. We have also had comments saying that the fact that the old staff came along too made it as welcoming and comfortable as the old Solas.***

Taigh Shiphoirt, Sinclair Avenue, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS12AP

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***One year on it feels as if we have been here forever and everyone is happy with the space and lots of activities happening in person and enjoyed by all..."***

We officially moved into Taigh Shiphoint on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June and spent two weeks preparing our new space and celebrated this occasion together with some of those we support at tea-party on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June before officially re-opening our doors and services on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June. Through the generous donations the charity receives, Alzheimer Scotland has invested in purchasing high quality furnishings, decor, and new equipment as part of this move to help create a comfortable, warm, and welcoming space for those living with dementia, their carers, and the local community to benefit from.

The space has a large Kitchen/Dining Room, Lounge Area, Small Quiet room, Separate Office, and access to an enclosed, level access shared Garden Space complete with raised flower beds and seating area via a large sliding patio door.

Why not check out the virtual tour of the space on the council's website at:

[www.cne-siar.gov.uk/home/health-and-social-care/care-homes/stornoway-care-homes/](http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/home/health-and-social-care/care-homes/stornoway-care-homes/)



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## TEAM SPOTLIGHT – SAY HELLO TO...

### Angela Macleod – Dementia Advisor

I joined the team in August 2023 and have enjoyed each day since then. I'm a Siarach and Gaelic speaker and lover of our language and culture and beautiful unspoilt environment that surrounds us.

It's a real privilege to work with such an excellent team at Alzheimer's Scotland (Western Isles) and to learn from the best. My role as Dementia Advisor allows me to support folk in the community who care and support people living with dementia. I provide 1-2-1 support and group support as well as developing various projects such as our recent Forget me Not Cafes on the last Wednesday of every month in Café an Roo.

I think my colleagues would say I drink far too much coffee for my own good, they even bought me a BIG special spoon at Christmas specially for my BIG Coffee cup!

I enjoy walking and now that I've completed my Paths for All Leader training which I hope to launch a new walking group soon which will be open to all carers and people living with Dementia and other members of the community. I do enjoy developing projects!

I enjoy travelling and recently returned from a holiday in Paris which was wonderful and hope to go somewhere sunny in the autumn if we don't get some sunshine soon!!

I'll keep you posted as our groups develop and please don't hesitate to call me, if you have any questions or concerns. Take care, Angela



## SOLAS – REGISTERED DAYCARE SERVICE

We are very proud at Solas day centre to provide a place for people with dementia to feel safe and relaxed and supported, as well as a place to have fun. It provides invaluable peer-support, a chance to socialise with others, as well as providing a variety of therapeutic activities that offer opportunities to do something different generating lots of fun and laughter.



Last year we moved into our brand-new premises and we have been as busy as ever! We had a wonderful visit from the Scottish Ballet who led a gentle exercise/dance session with us which everyone was able to join in with and had everybody laughing! We have had visits from the children and staff at Stornoway Primary Nursery as part of our intergenerational work and these have been very well-received from all at Solas with lots of positive feedback all-round.

October saw our first unannounced care inspection take place since before COVID and we were delighted with our

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report, feedback and evaluation. You can see the review on the Care Inspectorates website or pick up a copy from our office.

Decemeber we gathered everyone who attends Solas together for a Christmas Meal/Party at the end of 2023 in our new building! A wonderful Christmas dinner, fully catered by the County Hotel, and lots of carol singing to finish – it was an event thoroughly enjoyed by all!

This year we have continued to enjoy lots of different activities in SOLAS inviting residents from the care home coming over to join us on occasions, reuniting with old friends and making new. But there is one thing for sure, you can't beat a good old fahioned island ceildh!

We are so fortunate to have have a wide variety of musicians who are kindly giving up their time each month to provide live music for us and they get everyone singing along! Many people comment on how singing the old songs brings them back to when they were young, and stories are often then shared in the group about old village dances and ceildhs. We are very thankful for all those in the community that support what we do.

If you, or anyone you know, has been diagnosed with dementia and would be interested in coming along to our day centre, please get in touch with us for more information and we can arrange for you to come along and see us for a taster session. Call 01851702123 to speak to a member of the team about SOLAS or email [westernisles@alzscot.org](mailto:westernisles@alzscot.org)



## Solas Day Centre Stornoway

Attendees call Solas by different names

- Day Club
- Social Club
- Afternoon Tea
- Coffee Morning
- Activities Group

Feedback from carer:

*"Solas is great for Mum it's giving her routine in her week and she's also having fun"*

Feedback from attendee:

*"That was good today and we had a laugh"*

Activities attendees can choose include:

- Chatting • Games • Knitting
- Arts & crafts • Quizzes
- Gardening • Music
- Digital Football Memories
- Doggie Bingo • Singing
- Playing instruments

Can help attendees

- Not feel isolated
- Support their independence and skills
- Promote their mobility
- Rediscover hobbies and interests
- And have fun....

Feedback from attendees:

*"I'm so relaxed I could stay here all day"*

*"I love coming here, I can say what I like"*

*"It's great to get together and have company"*

*"I feel at home here, it's very relaxing"*

- Morning or afternoon sessions
  - Small group sessions
  - Group and individual
  - Therapeutic activities
  - In a homely setting
- Contact tel: 01851 702123



**Alzheimer Scotland**  
Action on Dementia

**Prevent.  
Care.  
Cure.**

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## GROUPS, ACTIVITIES AND WHATS ON GUIDE



### What

We host a range of activities and groups every month which are open to all to attend including Music, Arts and Crafts, Movement and Exercise, Doggie Bingo, Football Memorie and Drop In Cafes etc.

We also host closed peer support groups led by our dementia advisors for those caring for a people living with dementia to attend where they can gain advice, support and information from one and other.



### Where

Our groups are hosted online through Microsoft teams or in person across a range of Community hubs and venues including our Dementia Resource Centre at Taigh Shipoirt.



### When

Our groups are scheduled mainly monthly although sometimes weekly most regularly on a Monday to Friday basis, however on occasions we do host activities and groups in the evenings.

The best way to keep in the know with our latest groups and activities is by downloading our monthly whats on guide from our website at [www.alzscot.org/western-isles-drc](http://www.alzscot.org/western-isles-drc) or popping in to office in Stornoway to pick up a copy.

Want to receive the Whats on Guide for the Western Isles automatically to your inbox every month? Get in touch with any member of the local team and we'll add you to the e-mailing list.



### Why

Our groups and activities are perfect for you if you are a person living with dementia, or supporting someone living with dementia and would like to find out more about dementia and what services are available locally to help and/or support you.

They are also a fantastic source for all to find out how you can better support people living with dementia and those who support them in your local community as well as finding out more information about memory worries, brain health and ways you can support yourself and others in looking after you brain health.

BRAIN HEALTH WEEK (11<sup>TH</sup> – 17<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2024)


**YOU'VE JUST CORRCETED  
TRHEE TYPOS WITHOUT  
EVEN THIKNING ABOUT IT**



**Alzheimer  
Scotland**  
Action on Dementia



**Brain Health  
Scotland**

Prevent. Care. Cure.

**YOUR BRAIN IS AMZAING  
LET'S KEEP IT THAT WAY**

Find out more and make a  
Brain Health Pledge at [brainhealth.scot](https://brainhealth.scot)

***“Your Brain is who you are- it is your thoughts, feelings, knowledge and memories. It is curious and creative – and it needs to be protected”***

As part of the message of Prevent - Care -Cure, this year we travelled to a range of venues in Lewis and Harris, to share information on Brain Health Awareness, which is relevant throughout our lives from child to adult.

With the Message, Never Too Early, Never Too Late, emphasising the importance of early disease detection, recognising the risk factors that we can change and taking steps to do so no matter what stage of life we are at is vitally important.

The diseases that lead to Dementia start a long time before symptoms start. There is no guaranteed way to prevent every case of Dementia – BUT...there are lots of areas that we can take action on to reduce the risk. To find out more about how the steps you can take visit Brain Health Scotland's website on [www.brainhealth.scot](https://www.brainhealth.scot) and take the Brain Health Quiz.

For more information, or for a free Brain Health Awareness session, please contact the team either by emailing [westernisles@alzscot.org](mailto:westernisles@alzscot.org) or calling 01851702123

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## DEMENTIA AWARENESS WEEK 2024

Dementia Awareness Week is one of our annual campaigning weeks and this year's message is **Your Voice, Your Choice, Your Future**

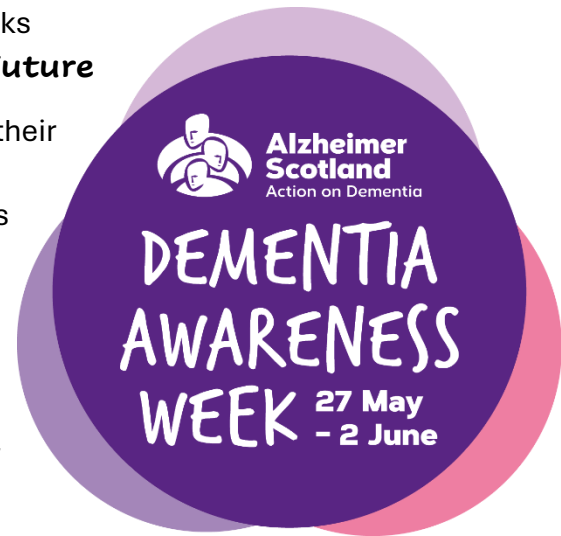
Each person living with dementia has their own unique story, and their needs, preferences and aspirations are as diverse as they are. At Alzheimer Scotland, we advocate for a care approach that enables people with dementia to live as well as they can for as long as they can.

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, Your Future**

To share this message within our local community this year and raise awareness of our services and supports, we took Information stands to a range of community hubs and locations including: -

Loch Maddy, Harris, Lochs, Carloway, Borge, Point, Stornoway Co-op and Stornoway Library

We were able to highlight Awareness around Dementia, offer information and advice to the community, share information on our services and what we do, where we are based, and received a number of enquiries. To crown off the week, we held a Quiz Night Fundraiser in the Stornoway Golf Club led by our wonderful quiz masters Liz and Janis where 9 teams battled it out to win a lovely hamper. In total, along with the raffle which we had been running all week, a wonderful total of £646.93 was raised.



**We are very grateful to all the venues for hosting us, the members of the community who spoke with us, and purchased Raffle tickets to support Fundraising for our Services**

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## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE – BRAIN HEALTH QUIZ



**According to the Scottish Government, how many people are estimated to be living with dementia in Scotland?**

- 75000
- 80,000
- 90000
- 100,000



**What part of the brain might be damaged if someone has lost the ability to form new memories**

- Hypothalamus
- Basal ganglia
- Hippocampus
- Occipital Cortex



**At what age is your brain fully formed?**

- 16
- 22
- 25
- 27



**At what age can we start to improve our brain health and reduce risk factors**

- In your 40s
- In your 20s
- Younger the Better
- In your 70s



**According to research done by the National Science Foundation, how many thoughts does the average person have each day?**

- Between 2,000 & 11,000
- Between 12,000 & 60,000
- Between 70,000 & 120,000
- More than 150,000



## FUNDRAISING AND DONATIONS



It wouldn't be possible to do what we do without the support and generous donations from our local communities.

**SO A HUGE BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO SUPPORT US EVERY YEAR!**

If you would be interested in holding your own fundraising event, get in touch with your local team who can support you along the way.

### Sarah and Joannes all weather 90K Step Challenge

"...My mother, Sarah's nanny was diagnosed with Alzheimer's last year. We expected it, but it was still hard to process.

We have been so lucky with the support we have been given since mum's diagnosis. When we saw the step challenge was coming up Sarah and I decided we would take part and try and raise some money for the local service. Well to say we picked the worst week is an understatement, we had 3 weather warnings, gale force winds, hail showers, driving rain. It would have been easier just to cancel it, but a few hours of 'pain' is nothing compared to what people with Alzheimer's are having to deal with.

Sarah would walk laps of the school during her break time, she was so determined and to make sure she could help other families like ours. We are so grateful to everyone that donated, and grateful we could contribute to the local service to ensure they can carry on their good work..."



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## **Birthday Girl's Generous Donation**

Heather Murray kindly donated a total of £1000 which was collected from her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday party celebrations...

**"...Delighted to be able to raise some funds for a much needed service in our community for those living with dementia and their families. I for one would be lost without this service..."**



## **60<sup>th</sup> Reunion Donation**

Raised over two events, former pupils of the Nicolson Institute and Lews Castle School celebrating their 60<sup>th</sup> Reunion in April 2023 kindly choose to support Alzheimer Scotland Western Isles Services along with Western Isles Association for Mental Health and donated £885 to both charities



*Thank You!*

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## VOLUNTEERS

At Alzheimer's Scotland we value those who volunteer and give of themselves and their time. They bring a range of skills, knowledge and personal experiences. Some of our volunteers offer musical sessions, commenting that they are enriched by attending Solas. All those that we support appreciate their input. One of our volunteers relieves staff of the task of setting up and serving lunches, she has commented

**" Volunteering at Solas is so rewarding. It's such an important resource for people living with dementia and their families as well as being a welcoming space where there's always a song or a story on the go".**

Volunteers are essential for helping with ongoing fundraising and our community groups and for the Volunteer can boost a person's self-esteem, Brain Health, and give great satisfaction. We have been very fortunate over the years to have had a wide range of Volunteers of different ages, generously donating their time and range of skills to support our Service, a group of whom had been supporting us and people in the community living with dementia for decades, some for over 35 years.



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## Volunteers are vital to Alzheimer Scotland's work. Can you give the gift of your time in the following areas:

- Raising awareness
- Day care
- Gardening
- Arts & music
- Groups
- Fundraising
- Events

For more information,  
contact Ellie Donnelly, Dementia Advisor  
by email: [Edonnelly@alzscot.org](mailto:Edonnelly@alzscot.org)  
or by phone: **01851 702123**

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**Answers to Quiz Questions:**

Q1 – 90000

Q2 – Hippocampus

Q3 – 25

Q4 – Younger the Better

Q5 – 12000 - 60000

Keep up to date with our latest events, groups, and activities through our monthly Whats on Guide. Visit : <https://www.alzscot.org/western-isles-drc> to download the latest version or pick up a copy from the Dementia Resource Centre/Office. Want to receive the Whats on Guide Automatically to your inbox every month, contact us on the below details and we'll add you to the e-mailing list.

**Alzheimer Scotland Local Information and Contacts:****Address:** Taigh Shiphoint, Sinclair Avenue, Stornoway, HS12AP**Telephone:** 01851 70 2123**Email:** [WesternIsles@alzscot.org](mailto:WesternIsles@alzscot.org)**Catriona MacRitchie**  
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**Dementia Advisor**Tel: 07584607581  
[amacleod@alzscot.org](mailto:amacleod@alzscot.org)

You can also find out more information at our website on [www.alzscot.org](http://www.alzscot.org) or contact our free 24/7 Dementia helpline (see image below for details)



Our support and activities are only possible thanks to the donations we gratefully receive. There are many ways to support our groups, please speak to any member of staff detailed above for more details. To make a donation, please consider donating to our local Just Giving page <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising>

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