

# Dementia in Scotland



**Alzheimer  
Scotland**  
Action on Dementia

Winter 2024 - Issue 109



**Warm hearts and  
healthy connections...**  
*wintering well, together*

# We're here for you this winter and always.



**Alzheimer Scotland**  
Action on Dementia

Prevent.  
Care.  
Cure.

We want to reassure you that Alzheimer Scotland will remain here for you this winter:

## Alzheimer Scotland's 24 hour Freephone Dementia Helpline

Our Helpline is there for you day or night, whenever you need us. Our highly skilled team will offer a listening ear and emotional support, provide information and will signpost on to other supports if necessary. Call on **0808 808 3000**. You can also contact our Helpline team via email on [helpline@alzscot.org](mailto:helpline@alzscot.org)

**24 HOUR**

Dementia  **Alzheimer Scotland**  
Action on Dementia

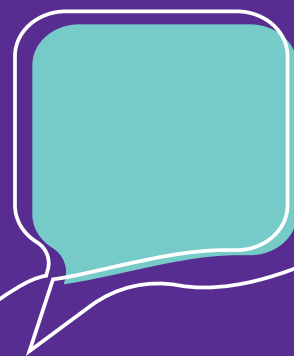
# Helpline

Freephone 0808 808 3000  
Email [helpline@alzscot.org](mailto:helpline@alzscot.org)



## our Dementia Advisors

If you need information, advice or advocacy in dealing with issues relating to dementia, our Dementia Advisors are here to help you. You can contact them between 9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday, and they 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. Call us on **0300 373 5774** (charged at a local call rate), or email [NDAS@alzscot.org](mailto:NDAS@alzscot.org)



## Our Centres

We know that energy and other costs of living remain a worry for many people. All our Centres are here to welcome you and offer a warm space and a cuppa. Our Centres are also open when no groups are running so do drop in and bring a friend or family member. To find out more about how we can help, and what's on at your local Centre, please go to our website at [www.alzscot.org/drc](http://www.alzscot.org/drc) or contact Alzheimer Scotland's National Dementia Advisor Service on **0300 373 5774**



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## Welcome

Welcome to the winter edition of Dementia in Scotland magazine.

We are delighted to share news and updates with you, from the experiences of our Active Voice group members at the recent Alzheimer Europe Conference to event highlights and local stories.

The winter months can be difficult, and we want to reassure you that we are here for you. We are providing support through our Helpline, our Dementia Advisors and our Centres - you can read more about this on the page to the left.

Our 'Winter Campaign' this year focuses on the concept of 'Wintering Well' and how you can stay healthy and connected at this time of year. Our Outdoor Dementia Resource Centre in Badaguish near Aviemore plays a key role with regular users of the Centre talking about the benefits of nature and how being in the great outdoors helps them live well. Thank you to Peter and Rosemary for their contribution to the campaign. You can read more about 'Wintering Well' on page 10.



We are very much looking forward to the opening of our second Outdoor Dementia Resource Centre in 2025. Based at the Lauriston Lodge building at Lauriston Castle near Cramond, the Centre will be a hub for a range of therapeutic, nature based activities. You can find out more about this exciting development on page 14.

As always, our fundraisers have gone that extra mile for Alzheimer Scotland. From abseiling and ziplining to hill climbing and cycling, every penny you have raised stays in Scotland and your support is invaluable. You can read about some of our amazing fundraisers on page 15.

Finally, I want to thank all our staff, volunteers and supporters who help Alzheimer Scotland make sure nobody faces dementia alone. Thank you.

Best wishes for the festive season.

*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](mailto:crussell@alzscot.org)**

**Published by:**  
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## Centre users unwind with yoga sound bath



Yoga and its benefits have been talked about for years, but have you heard of a yoga sound bath? Once our team at our Brain Health & Dementia Resource Centre in Kilmarnock had personally participated in the sound bath experience from Fiona Smith at Resonate Yoga, they knew it made sense to bring this activity to the Centre. Sound baths are a meditative practice involving the use of crystal singing bowls that create vibrational energy which entrains our brain waves and creates the sense of calm.

Sheena Boyd, Centre Manager, said: "I wanted all our attendees to experience the beneficial effects the sound bath had on me. Fiona has an incredible way of promoting calm and relaxation through the crystal bowls which is a need for the people we support. It was a joy to witness how quickly people in the group relaxed and see first-hand the positive impact it had. As we know from our Brain Health initiative, long term stress can harm the brain and make it harder to keep on top of other factors that are key to keeping our brains healthy. Making the time for ourselves to switch off and relax is crucial."

The first session in the Centre was delivered to our 'Supper Club' group, whose members are people living with young onset dementia and their carers.

One of our carers Angela Duckworth commented:

***"The sound bath had a profound impact on my husband, Adrian, who lives with vascular dementia. When Fiona started to chant her mantra, Adrian joined in which was remarkable as he had never heard this chanting before, and his daily speech is limited. It took us all by surprise, he totally relaxed and thoroughly enjoyed his sound bath experience."***

Due to the positive feedback and the relaxed outcome from all participants, it was decided to deliver this experience once a month to the Centre and make it open to all.

Yoga teacher, Fiona said: "For me as a yoga teacher, delivering a sound healing practice gives me great satisfaction in line with yoga philosophies, to give back to my community and serve others gladly. I can offer a tranquil experience which calms the nervous system and lowers blood pressure. The sound and vibrations of the crystal singing bowls and other instruments are a soothing balm for the mind and create a deep sense of relaxation. It is particularly poignant when couples attend the session together and can both enjoy the peace - feeling more centred and connected to themselves and to one another. The sound waves produced in a sound bath resonate with the energy centres and endocrine points in the body bringing about balance and harmony. A person does not hear sound only through the ears. We hear and feel sound through every pore of the body. This means that everyone can experience a sound bath regardless of physical ability either seated or lying down in any position they are most comfortable in."



## David's story – 30 years of support

### Alzheimer Scotland Trustee David McClements reflects on more than 30 years of campaigning and fundraising.

After I first became involved with Alzheimer Scotland, I was part of a local branch in Falkirk. We had a small but very dedicated team of volunteers. Now more than 30 years later, it's amazing to see the progress that has been made. It was in 1991 when, as a trainee solicitor, I worked with Evelyn McPake, who had a close family experience with dementia. At that time there was much less public awareness of dementia, nor was there much support available for those with a diagnosis. But Evelyn was one of a number of individuals committed to changing that and was instrumental in establishing Alzheimer Scotland.

It was an exciting time. One of the early projects I worked on for Alzheimer Scotland was helping with a response to consultations on proposed legislation which became the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act. It was a real landmark when it was enacted in Scotland in 2000 because it established principles with important protections for the rights of people who were not able to act or make decisions for themselves. It also enabled people to better plan for their own future arrangements.

Incapacity and mental health law has formed a key part of my legal practice ever since. I often work with people who have memory issues or a diagnosis of dementia, and it's so important to ensure that their rights are protected. It's important to involve the person as much as possible in decision making and to avoid disregarding them and their wishes and preferences. It's very rewarding being able to support someone and help them plan for the future, especially those who may not have anyone else to help them. I really enjoy hearing their life stories and perhaps giving them a bit of peace of mind.

*Over the years I have taken on the role of a Trustee and latterly Convener of Alzheimer Scotland. The organisation has grown so much since I first joined and I've seen how they have helped improve awareness and understanding around dementia, as well as campaigning for issues like long term care. I think what has kept me involved all these years is that, for all the improvements that have been made, there are still many injustices out there to tackle – the discrimination and the ageism, for example, that's associated with the illness.*



The work I've done with Alzheimer Scotland has had real benefits for me both personally and professionally. As well as positively impacting my legal practice, it has inspired me to keep my fitness in order by taking up fundraising challenges. I'm 57 now and was quite pleased to have survived the Men's 10K race in Edinburgh recently, running for Alzheimer Scotland, and beat my age! I've also completed a sponsored zipline across the Clyde which was rather nerve wracking as I do not have a head for heights, as well as completing a few half marathons for Alzheimer Scotland. I'm planning to step back from my role on the Board, but I intend to continue to support Alzheimer Scotland's amazing work as much as I can.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank David for all the hard work, time and commitment he has given to Alzheimer Scotland over the last 30 years. Thank you!

# Glasgow cook launches charity cookbook project

A Glasgow-based cook whose mum has Alzheimer's disease is bringing together favourite recipes from people living with dementia for a new charity cookbook. Marc Mazoyer, 40, was inspired to launch the project in July as a way to preserve precious family recipes while raising vital funds for Alzheimer Scotland. Marc's mum Therese, 72, was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease last year. A keen baker her whole life, Marc describes the fond memories he has of cooking together with his mum since he was a young boy. But as her illness developed, she lost all interest in cooking. Afraid that his mum's most loved dishes may be lost for good, he began writing down copies of her recipes. It was then that Marc got the idea to bring together recipes from other families whose loved ones are living with dementia to create a charity cookbook. Marc previously worked as a dessert chef in Glasgow's Butterfly & Pig restaurant but is now a cognitive behavioural therapist for the NHS. He posts recipes and wellbeing advice on Instagram as [Cooking\\_Therapist\\_Glasgow](#).

Marc said: "Recipes can so easily be lost and that's what gave me the idea to start saving my family's favourites."

"Everyone loved my mum's cooking, and she was famous for making things like Christmas cake and chocolate mousse. As mum's Alzheimer's developed, she lost her confidence and stopped cooking altogether. I just didn't want us to lose those special dishes that had become such a family tradition."



"My gran had dementia and she was also a great cook, so I've made a point of saving her handwritten recipes too so we can keep the family tradition alive for future generations."

"It feels like a small but meaningful way of counteracting the many small losses that characterise this illness."

Marc is calling on other families affected by dementia to send him their recipes and has so far been sent almost 40 dishes.

He said: "I'd like to bring together sweet and savoury recipes from people living with dementia and their loved ones. Ideally recipes that make you smile and bring back memories about good times in people's lives. It doesn't even have to be your own recipe, just a dish that you and your loved one enjoyed together."

"It's lovely to get recipes with information about the person who made them and I've been sent lots of handwritten recipes too."

"All the profits will go to Alzheimer Scotland. They've been a great source of information for me and we're arranging for them to provide support to mum too."

The book will feature a range of sweet and savoury dishes alongside tips and suggested recipes for making with a person with dementia.

Marc added: "I'm going to include some bread recipes too as the action of rolling and kneading can be so therapeutic. I'm really hopeful to continue to get more recipes so I would encourage people to get in touch."

If you know anyone living with dementia or a loved one who would like to contribute a recipe, email Marc at [mmaz00@hotmail.com](mailto:mmaz00@hotmail.com)



## Marc's mum's carrot & orange soup recipe

This soup isn't just delicious and economical, it also is a cheering bold orange colour and feels like you are filling up on vitamin C on dark winter days.

### Ingredients:

**25g butter**

**1 tablespoon olive oil**

**450g(ish) of carrots**

**2 medium onions**

**20g plain flour  
(gluten free if preferred)**

**850ml chicken or  
vegetable stock**

**½ grated zest and all of  
the juice of an orange**

**Salt and pepper to taste**

### Method:

1. Start by peeling the carrots and onions. Slice the carrot and chop the onions (these get blended later)
2. Heat the butter and oil in a large saucepan and add the carrot and onion. Fry these until they are beginning to soften (about 10 minutes) stirring occasionally.
3. Sprinkle in the flour and stir into the veg. Stir for a minute.
4. Remove from the heat and stir in the stock.
5. Return to the heat and bring to the boil, then lower the heat and add the orange zest and juice as well as salt and pepper.
6. Put a lid on and simmer for 30 minutes.
7. Allow the soup to cool slightly before blending.



## Dementia Assistance Dog placement

The Dementia Dog team is looking to place the next Dementia Assistance Dog with a family in central Scotland. Dementia Dog is an innovative collaboration between Alzheimer Scotland and Dogs For Good which sees trained dogs matched with families where someone is at an early stage of dementia, lives at home with their full time carer and has a secure fenced garden.

Dementia Assistance Dogs are specially trained dogs; they carry full public access rights and are trained to offer practical task support, act as a social connector in the community and are a constant loving companion. They can also improve confidence, increase motivation and add a sense of purpose and fun in their family's life.



If you or someone you support would like to know more, please get in touch with Lynsey Neilson, Dementia Dog Project Coordinator by emailing [lneilson@alzscot.org](mailto:lneilson@alzscot.org)

## Would you like to share your experiences?

Stories like yours can educate and raise awareness, inspire people to fundraise, volunteer, and most importantly, help others know that they are not facing dementia alone. Sharing your story can be a positive and cathartic experience and a chance to make a real difference. For someone living with a diagnosis of dementia, hearing how others navigate similar experiences can provide reassurance and practical tips on how to live as well as you can for as long as you can. For carers and loved ones of people with dementia, stories of compassion and resilience can offer valuable insights and encouragement. Our volunteers and supporters also have amazing stories to inspire others, from the smallest act of kindness to incredible feats of physical endurance.

**We want to hear stories from all walks of life, reflecting the varied experiences of those affected by dementia. Whether your story is a heartfelt memory, a moment of breakthrough, or a testament to resilience, it matters.**

**Email us at [comms@alzscot.org](mailto:comms@alzscot.org)**

# A day in the life of an Active Voice Development Officer

We met up with Norie Williamson, one of our Active Voice Development Workers for a chat about his role. Norie has been with Alzheimer Scotland for a decade and has been a Practice Team Leader, Locality Leader and Dementia Advisor before moving into his current role in 2022.



*Norie presenting at the ADI Conference with Joanna Boddy from NDCAN*

## ? What made you decide to focus your career on dementia support, and this role in particular?

My interest in Active Voice was piqued during my time as a Dementia Advisor. Back then, I facilitated the Inverclyde Dementia Reference Group which empowered people living with dementia to discuss important issues that were affecting them. When the role of Active Voice Development Officer came up, I was keen to apply as I knew it would give me the chance to take this forward on a larger scale. But probably the biggest impetus for me to work in this field has been my personal journey as a carer for my mother, who lived with dementia.

## ? How would you describe your role?

The point of my role is to ensure that people living with dementia, either personally or in a caring capacity, have their say and are listened to. A key responsibility is to create engagement opportunities for our two Active Voice groups – the Scottish Dementia Working Group (SDWG) and the National Dementia Carers Action Network (NDCAN). I support the members of both groups in all aspects of their work, whether preparing for a large-scale event, gathering input for a publication, or organising participation in a forum.



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

Every day is different! One of my main responsibilities is to help Active Voice members prepare for upcoming meetings. Some of my time is also spent accompanying members to peer support groups in our Brain Health & Dementia Resource Centres. These visits offer a great opportunity to explain our work as an Active Voice team and enable us to drive home the message that every voice matters. This encourages people to share their personal experiences of dementia, and of the support they receive. The success of the Active Voice groups means we're frequently invited to attend conferences and events both at home and abroad. One of the highlights of my year was accompanying an NDCAN member to the Alzheimer Disease International Conference in Krakow, Poland where we gave a joint presentation entitled, 'Every Story Matters'.

## ? What do you like most about your job?

Without a doubt, the best part of my job is having a daily opportunity to connect with people who are impacted by dementia, listen to their stories and make sure their voice is heard. It's very rewarding to see how their collective efforts can result in positive change.

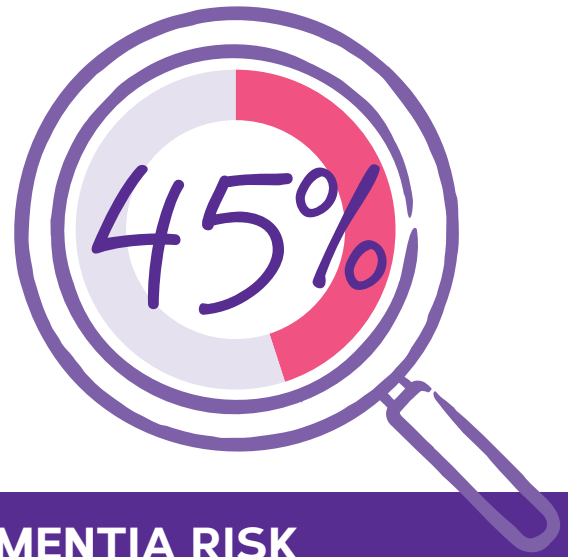
## ? Who inspires you?

My mum. She was the friendliest person I've ever known, always making time for others, no matter how busy she was. Her profound sense of wisdom was so special, and so much of her advice and guidance stays with me to this day.

















# Brain Health Scotland update

A new report published in August has identified two new ways to lower our risk of dementia, and estimates that up to 45% of cases could be preventable. The Lancet Commission report adds 'uncorrected vision loss' and 'high cholesterol' to the previous list of 12 modifiable risk factors (things we can do to reduce our risk). It found that, together, uncorrected vision loss and high cholesterol are associated with 9% of all dementia cases. The updated list of risk factors is:



## FACTORS LINKED TO DEMENTIA RISK

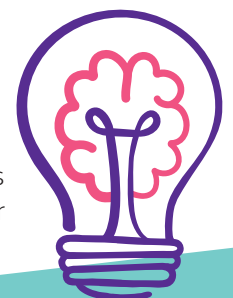
EARLY LIFE	MID-LIFE					LATER-LIFE	
 <p><b>Quality of education</b> 5%</p>	 <p><b>Hearing impairment</b> 7%</p>	 <p><b>High cholesterol</b> 7%</p>	 <p><b>Depression</b> 3%</p>	 <p><b>Brain injury</b> 3%</p>	 <p><b>Physical inactivity</b> 2%</p>	 <p><b>Visual impairment</b> 2%</p>	
	 <p><b>Diabetes</b> 2%</p>	 <p><b>Smoking</b> 2%</p>	 <p><b>High blood pressure</b> 2%</p>	 <p><b>High body weight</b> 1%</p>	 <p><b>Excessive alcohol</b> 1%</p>	 <p><b>Social isolation</b> 5%</p>	 <p><b>Air Quality</b> 3%</p>

Dementia prevention, intervention, and care: 2024 report of the Lancet Standing Commission, G. Livingston et al

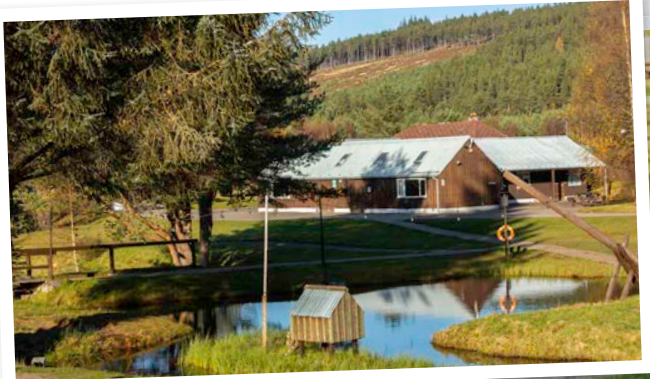
The findings of the report build on the work of Brain Health Scotland, which was launched by Alzheimer Scotland in 2020 to promote lifelong brain health and create a legacy of long-term dementia prevention strategies. By reaching out as early as possible into our schools and wider communities we can actively engage with the public and target people known to be at risk of brain diseases. By empowering Scotland to look after its brain health, we could cut the estimated 20,000 new cases being diagnosed each year by nearly half.

New evidence also suggests that reducing the risk of dementia increases the number of healthy years of life for people who do develop the condition. We want to make sure everybody has equal, and early, access to diagnostic services like our Brain Health Service in Aberdeen. A multi-agency project between Scottish Government, NHS Grampian Public Health, and Alzheimer Scotland, this dedicated space enables people to recognise their personal risk of diseases that can lead to dementia.

Our Brain Health Scotland team's mission is to inspire and empower people to protect their brain health and reduce the risk of diseases that lead to dementia. Working with all ages, from young to old, and across the whole of Scotland, we provide information and advice on brain health. It's never too early or too late to take steps to look after your brain health.



# Wintering Well Our 2024 Winter Fundraising Campaign



This year, our Winter Campaign focuses on the importance of staying healthy and connected while still enjoying nature. Our Outdoor Dementia Resource Centre in Badaguish provided the inspiration for the campaign.

Winter can be a wonderful time of year – socialising with friends and family and making more time for rest. But it can also bring its challenges, and we know that for some people, winter can be a difficult season.

Cold weather can make it harder to do the things we enjoy and the temptation to stay indoors can lead to us feeling isolated. But with care, it is still possible to enjoy the outdoors during the winter months.

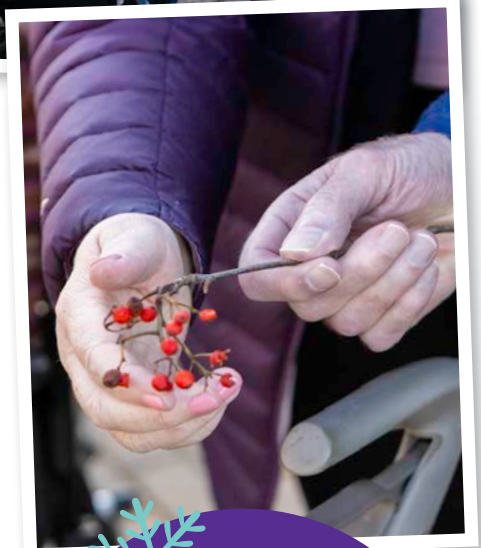
You could meet up with a friend for a walk or even join a local walking group. If you find it hard to get out and about, spending a few minutes every day next to an open window will give you a boost from the fresh air and exposure to natural daylight. You can find more suggestions in our Wintering Well booklet.

Our campaign strapline, **'Warm hearts and healthy connections... wintering well, together'** sums up the importance of looking after ourselves this winter.



As part of this year's campaign, we have compiled a *Wintering Well* booklet to help make sure that you are prepared for the months ahead. It's important to stay warm and healthy over the coming season, so to help, our booklet is full of useful tips to help you plan for the shorter days and drop in temperatures.

It covers practical things to consider during winter, such as how to heat your home efficiently, but also how to look after your health when the weather makes it harder to do the things you enjoy. We've included ideas to help lift your mood if you're feeling a bit down, information about maintaining a healthy diet, practical advice about how to get out and about safely, and much more to make sure you 'winter well' this year.



You can download the  
'Wintering Well - Top Tips'  
booklet here  
[www.alzscot.org/winter](http://www.alzscot.org/winter)



Our Outdoor Dementia Resource Centre in Badaguish opened its doors in 2023. We visited the Centre in November to talk to staff and Centre users about the variety of groups and activities on offer throughout the year, but especially during winter when it can be harder to get outside.

As well as a range of outdoor activities, the team has created a schedule of events that aren't weather dependent, allowing people to enjoy the Centre all year round. Indoor activities include Cognitive Stimulation Therapy, a nature themed 'Bringing the Outdoors In' programme, and even Gaelic language learning.

We also met with our magazine cover stars, Peter and Rosemary, who explained how this wonderful space has benefited them.

***"We discovered the Outdoor Dementia Resource Centre in Badaguish near Aviemore, and we are now regular visitors. Kenny and his team there are worth their weight in gold. And there's nothing we haven't given a go - jam making, willow weaving, cycling, gardening ... you name it! And of course, walking. That simple pleasure we can often take for granted, and one which offers so many mental and physical health benefits."** - Peter*

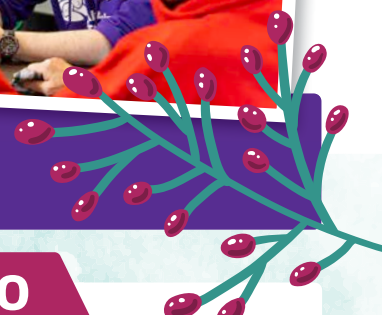
Find out more about the Centre and read Peter and Rosemary's story at [www.alzscot.org/winter](http://www.alzscot.org/winter)



***"What I really admire about Peter and Rosemary is their positive attitude, focusing on what they can do, rather than what they can't - and that's something we try to encourage at Alzheimer Scotland. I love working in our Outdoor Dementia Resource Centre, helping people to connect with nature and get outdoors, which can be difficult for people with dementia."** - Kenny Wright, Alzheimer Scotland's Outdoor Resource Centre Coordinator*



*This December, we're asking our supporters to help people with dementia and their carers to winter well by enjoying the great outdoors.*



Being able to enjoy nature can make all of us feel happier. It is especially beneficial for people living with dementia, bringing a sense of pleasure, comfort, stimulation and freedom. However, we also know that people with dementia face many challenges in safely accessing nature, from their local park to the wider countryside and Scotland's many beautiful wild landscapes.

Your donation will help us to continue addressing these challenges, so many more people living with dementia can benefit from the wonders of Scotland's green spaces.

**£15**

could support someone to participate in a dementia-friendly nature walk

**£100**

could buy basic gardening equipment for a dementia-friendly allotment

**£25**

could provide a hot outdoor lunch for people with dementia and their carers

**£265**

could run an Outdoor Dementia and Brain Health Centre for a day

**£60**

could buy a trail camera to capture footage of local wildlife

Support people living with dementia to enjoy the benefits of the great outdoors. Donate today at [www.alzscot.org/winter](http://www.alzscot.org/winter)



# Active Voice in Geneva



the scottish  
dementia  
working group

**ndcan**  
National Dementia Carers  
Action Network

**Geneva, Switzerland was the spectacular setting for the 34th annual Alzheimer Europe conference in October and once again, Active Voice group members were a key part of the Alzheimer Scotland delegation.**

Margaret McCallion and Rynagh Flynn travelled on behalf of the Scottish Dementia Working Group (SDWG), with Thea Laurie and Maureen Huggins representing the National Dementia Carers Action Network (NDCAN). Together, they ensured that the voices of those personally affected by dementia were heard loud and clear. Active Voice's involvement got off to a flying start, with Margaret taking to the stage on day one. Margaret is a member of the European Working Group for People with Dementia and in this capacity, was invited to join fellow members to speak openly about her personal experience of living with dementia. The audience was inspired as she spoke about accepting her diagnosis and how she is now 'living her best life'.

On day two, Rynagh shared her experience of participating in our 2023 Winter Campaign which focused on the importance of dementia research. She used the platform to outline her hopes and aspirations for the future of research, emphasise the importance of involving people with lived experience, and celebrate the idea that each of us, in our own way, can contribute.

It was Thea and Maureen's turn on day three, and they took the opportunity to share their perspectives in a more unusual way. They decided to hold a 'conversation' – questioning each other about the work of NDCAN and the activities they have been involved with. This includes hospital improvement programmes, work with speech and language students, and working with NHS Education Scotland for a training film for health and social care staff. They asked, 'Why are you part of NDCAN?' and each offered candid responses about their experiences when their loved ones were receiving care.

Active Voice also showcased two poster presentations at the conference. One highlighted the recently updated suite of information leaflets, 'For Carers, by Carers' and the second, 'Partners in Research', showed how the Active Voice groups have developed strong relationships with dementia research partners, including the Centre of Discovery Brain Sciences at the University of Edinburgh. Rynagh and Margaret also joined Dr Laura Lebec and Professor Louise Ritchie from the Alzheimer Scotland Centre for Policy and Practice on stage to highlight the importance of our collaborative work. They delivered an engaging presentation about their involvement with a project, 'Guidance of Life, Work and Career – Dementia in the Workplace – Career Guidance'.

Having wrapped up their contributions at this year's conference so well, members are already looking forward to next year's event which will be held in Bologna, Italy, in October 2025.

Find out more about the work of Active Voice at [www.alzscot.org/active-voice](http://www.alzscot.org/active-voice)



## Our Annual Conference

On Friday 20 September, we welcomed 400 attendees to the Edinburgh International Conference Centre (EICC) for our Annual Conference. The theme for the day was 'Your choice, Your voice, Your future' and we had a range of informative sessions and wonderful presenters.

At Alzheimer Scotland, the voice of lived experience is at the heart of everything we do, and our conference was opened by Tommy McLean (Scottish Dementia Working Group) and Maureen Huggins (National Dementia Carers Action Network). Tommy and Maureen shared their personal experiences. Tommy as a person with dementia and Maureen as a former carer.



Our Opening Session keynote speaker was Scott Mitchell, People's Champion of the Dame Barbara Windsor Dementia Mission. In 2022, the UK government announced a National Dementia Mission that Scott had helped campaign for in his late wife's name. Scott spoke about his life with Barbara, the impact that Alzheimer's disease had on their lives, his campaigning work and the commitment he has to the Mission.

The programme for the day included five different sessions, each with a specific focus – 'Protecting personhood', 'Practice evolutions and innovations', 'The future is green', 'The future of long-term care' and 'Dementia research in Scotland'. There were also opportunities for networking and browsing our exhibitors' space.

It was a truly inspirational day, and we'd like to thank all our speakers, attendees and exhibitors who helped to make it a success. Thank you.

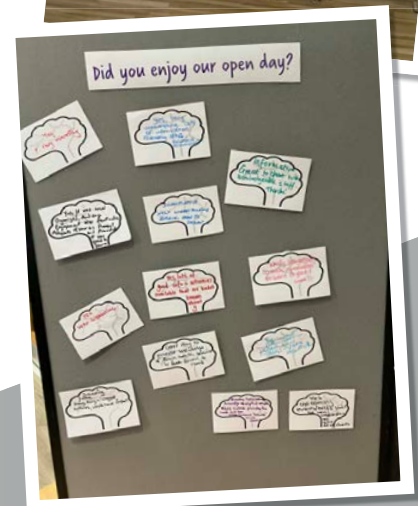
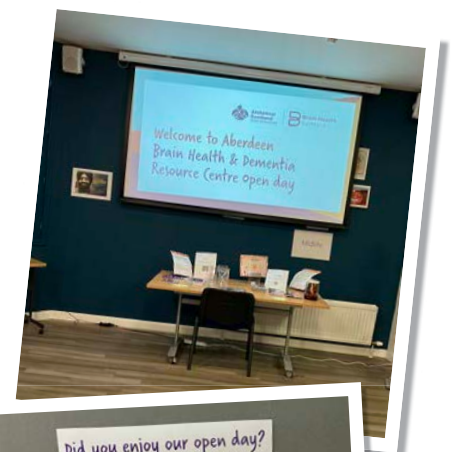
## Brain Health & Dementia Resource Centre Open Days

In September, as part of World Alzheimer's Month, we hosted Brain Health Open Days across our nine Brain Health & Dementia Resource Centres. The Open Days were aimed at anyone with an interest in, or concern about their brain health and provided people with the opportunity to find out the latest information about prevention, risk reduction and maintaining a healthy brain throughout life.

Our teams in each Centre were on hand to share insights, answer questions and introduce new prevention initiatives. The days were well attended, attracting new visitors, including professionals such as Social Workers and Community Psychiatric Nurses.

We believe that it's never too early or too late to start thinking about looking after your brain and we invite everyone, no matter your age, to pop into one of our Brain Health & Dementia Resource Centres to learn more about the things you can do to keep your brain healthy.

You can find out where your nearest Brain Health & Dementia Resource Centre is here [www.brainhealth.scot/brainhealthcentres](http://www.brainhealth.scot/brainhealthcentres)





# Lauriston Castle Outdoor Dementia Resource Centre

We were delighted to announce at our Annual Conference in September that we would be opening a second outdoor Dementia Resource Centre in 2025. Our first outdoor Centre opened in Badaguish near Aviemore in 2023 and so far over 1250 people have benefited from the groups and activities on offer there.

Our second Outdoor Centre will be based in the Lauriston Lodge building at Lauriston Castle near Cramond in Edinburgh. The Lodge has undergone significant upgrading and reconfiguration works and the interior now follows the principles of dementia-friendly design and reflects the feel of the local area, bringing a sense of homeliness and familiarity. With access to the adjacent memory garden, wonderfully maintained by The Forget-Me-Not Trust, the Centre will be a hub for a wide range of nature-inspired pastimes that anyone can enjoy. A full programme of therapeutic and creative activities will be available, designed to promote independence, social interaction and provide inspiration for people to try something new. Sessions such as gardening and horticulture, mindfulness and reminiscence, Cognitive Stimulation Therapy, outdoor relaxation, even an outdoor dementia café will be on offer. These experiences will be enhanced by the unique surroundings of the Castle itself and its wider grounds, with walks, trails, and an abundance of local wildlife.

We are learning more and more about the benefits of 'green health' and we know the impact it can have on people with dementia can be transformative. By providing the opportunity for people to spend time in the great outdoors, we are helping them to improve their physical and mental wellbeing in many ways. The Centre will bring untold benefits to people with a diagnosis of dementia, as well as anyone keen to learn more about the steps we can take to look after our brain health. Our Centre at Lauriston Castle is due to open in 2025.



# Making every step count

## Scotland's Memory Walk

We would like to say a huge thank you to the 600+ participants in Scotland's Memory Walk throughout September. We were able to host large-scale walks for the first time since 2019 and it was wonderful to see so many enthusiastic walkers in Inverness, Edinburgh, Dundee and Glasgow. We were also joined by some fantastic, high-profile supporters: Frank Stephen (see below), Amanda Kopel, Graeme Sutherland and Mark Hateley, who were a great source of inspiration.

We also had amazing locality walks in Aberdeenshire, Angus, Fife and the Western Isles, where our local teams walked alongside community members to raise vital funds for dementia and brain health. Then there were our intrepid 'Your Walk, Your Way' supporters - choosing their own routes with a special meaning for them.

In total, our participants walked almost 4 million steps! They have also raised over **£83,000** with donations still coming in.



## Going the distance

Some of our supporters have undertaken truly epic fundraising treks, covering hundreds of miles and raising thousands of pounds.

When Frank Stephen's wife Moira moved into residential care, he began an incredible solo journey that took him along the John O'Groats Trail - 147 miles from Inverness to John O'Groats - plus another 27 miles of hillwalking. His walk raised £35,000.

*"I'm 74 and was amazed I didn't have any sore bits along the way. I loved every moment, and I was totally blown away by the support I got. I had friends walking with me a lot of the way and I finished the trail in 14 days, visiting Moira in between trips."*

Longstanding supporter Ross McNamee was joined by a group of family and friends to walk 80 miles through Ireland this summer, raising over £22,600. In total, Ross has raised over £136,000 for Alzheimer Scotland and dedicates his fundraising efforts to his mum, Angie, who was diagnosed with dementia when she was just 40.

*"I am surrounded by the best mates in the world who make life a hell of a lot easier for me and I will never be able to thank them enough or appreciate them more if I tried."*





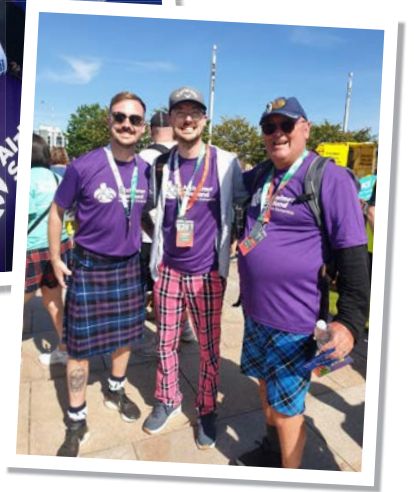
# Running, cycling and abseiling for dementia

It has been an incredible year for major fundraising events such as the Edinburgh Marathon Festival and Kiltwalk. We would like to thank everyone who pulled on their trainers, got on their bike, abseiled from bridges, or crossed the Clyde on a zipline.

## Best foot forward

Around 900 supporters ran for us in 2024, from the 5km route at Supernova Kelpies to the London Marathon. Almost half of them took part in the Edinburgh Marathon Festival, which raised over £226,000 alone.

Naomi made the leap from powerlifting to long-distance running this year to raise money in celebration of her grandad who lives in Fife. She completed her first ever half marathon in Edinburgh this spring, raising a fantastic £1,000 "If I could offer advice to anyone who is considering taking on a fundraising challenge, I'd say just go for it! Try not to overthink it or doubt yourself, you can achieve whatever goal you set – it just takes some determination, the sense of achievement makes it all worthwhile."



Not all fundraising is fast. We had 771 Kiltwalk participants this year walking in Glasgow, Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Dundee and raising over £143,000.

Andrew teamed up with his twin brother Grant and their dad Ian for the Dundee Kiltwalk this summer, raising over £2,000 in honour of their grandmother Ruby, who is living with Alzheimer's disease.

"As a family we've always enjoyed being outdoors, so when we heard about the Kiltwalk we thought – let's give it a go! We chose to do the Mighty Stride, a 21.5 mile route from St Andrews to Dundee, to raise money for Alzheimer Scotland because it's a cause close to us as a family."

## Don't look down!

It takes a certain kind of person to strap on a harness and drop from a bridge, shoot across a river on a metal cable, or jump from a plane. But that's exactly what 73 participants did for us this year. So a huge thanks to those brave souls who raised almost £50,000 for us in 2024.

Look out on Facebook and Instagram for photos from our last big event of the year – Supernova Forth Bridge held in early November, where over 600 participants walked and ran Edinburgh's famous bridge to raise vital funds for dementia care, research and better brain health.



## Get in gear

It was wonderful to bring cycling back to our official events calendar by being an official charity partner for Ride the North this year. Despite being our first year at this event since 2017, our participants raised a fantastic £12,500.



# Challenges for 2025

Your favourite new year challenge is back for 2025!

As the new year approaches, so does our fantastic 90k Steps Challenge.

For January 2025, we're challenging you to complete 90,000 steps in a single week. Start 2025 as you mean to go on – getting fit, maintaining your brain health and raising vital funds for people living with dementia.

Take part on your own or as part of a team. Why not make it a competition with your family, friends or colleagues?

It's quick and easy to take part. Scan the QR code to join our 90k Step Challenge Facebook group now.

[www.facebook.com/groups/90ksteps2025](http://www.facebook.com/groups/90ksteps2025)

90K  
STEPS  
CHALLENGE

FREE  
Alzheimer Scotland  
t-shirt will be posted  
once your first donation  
has been received.  
Raise £150 and receive  
a beanie.



## Stitching Stars

Could you be a Stitching Star next spring? Our creative challenge will be back for March 2025, and we can't wait for all our crafty supporters to knit, sew, crochet, quilt and raise vital sponsorship for a great cause. If you raise over £100, you'll even receive one of our stylish Stitching Star tote bags!

All you need to do is start your fundraising page and work on a star-themed design through March. Share your fundraising page and your craft updates with family and friends throughout the month to boost your sponsorship and let everyone see your amazing creations.

Watch out on [www.alzscot.org](http://www.alzscot.org) early next year to sign up for Stitching Stars 2025 or join [facebook.com/groups/stitchingstarsalzscot](https://facebook.com/groups/stitchingstarsalzscot) to get some early inspiration.



If you were a participant at any of our 2024 events – thank you! If you have been inspired to get involved in 2025 you can email us at [events@alzscot.org](mailto:events@alzscot.org) or visit [www.alzscot.org/events](http://www.alzscot.org/events)

## Membership update

In this edition of the magazine, you'll find enclosed a letter outlining some changes to the Alzheimer Scotland membership structure. These changes were agreed at our Annual General Meeting held on 15 November.

From 1 December 2024, we are now offering you a choice of two different types of Membership – both types are free.

Please take the time to read this letter as it explains in detail the difference between the two types of membership and what action you need to take to confirm your choice of membership.

*Thank you.*



## Have you met ADAM?

*Are you curious about technology but not sure where to start or what is available? Maybe ADAM could help!*

Our free online platform ADAM (About Digital and Me) relaunched in September at our Annual Conference. ADAM has been co-designed by people living with dementia and their carers and provides an unbiased and trusted resource for families who find it difficult to find the right technology at the right time.

All the technology you see in the ADAM catalogue has been tried and tested by people with dementia and their carers and only listed if people with lived experience have found it useful. The platform shares this knowledge for free to help you make informed choices and take the next steps towards trying the technology out for yourself.

ADAM has an inbuilt conversational questionnaire for those who don't know where to start. The questionnaire helps ADAM to get to know you and that's how we know what to recommend. The full product catalogue can be browsed at any time to get a flavour of what might be useful. If you have less time and think you already know what you are looking for, the ADAM search bar is there for you to type in an item or a concern to see what ADAM recommends.

People with lived experience of dementia have helped us to create ADAM and we hope you will enjoy using it. We'd like to say thank you to everyone who participated in the development of the platform over the last three years.

To visit ADAM go to:

<https://meetadam.org>

**ADAM**   
About Digital And Me





**Alzheimer  
Scotland**  
Action on Dementia

# MAKE A DIFFERENCE – BECOME A HELPLINE VOLUNTEER

**We are recruiting  
new volunteers to be  
part of our Dementia  
Helpline team.**

Can you spare 8 hours  
each month to help us  
make sure nobody faces  
dementia alone?

Join us for a Dementia  
Helpline online information  
session on Tuesday 14 January  
from 6pm until 8pm.

Our next Helpline Volunteer  
Preparation Programme will  
be running during January and  
February 2025; this will be delivered  
in 4 sessions, some of which will be  
in person and some online.

For further information and other  
training dates please email  
[helpline@alzscot.org](mailto:helpline@alzscot.org)

[www.alzscot.org/helplinevolunteer](http://www.alzscot.org/helplinevolunteer)



**24 HOUR**  
Dementia



**Alzheimer  
Scotland**  
Action on Dementia

# Helpline

Freephone 0808 808 3000  
Email [helpline@alzscot.org](mailto:helpline@alzscot.org)





# Join TeamAlzScot!

## Spring 2025

Spring into 2025 by committing to take on a run, walk or challenge and raise money for those living with dementia in Scotland.

### 90k Steps Challenge

Challenge yourself at home by taking on 90,000 steps in one week this January

### Inverness Half Marathon / 5k

9 March | Inverness

### Falkirk Wheel Abseil

14 March | Falkirk

### Supernova Kelpies 5k

14 March | Falkirk

### Glasgow Kiltwalk

26 & 27 April | Glasgow

