

Western Isles Services NEWSLETTER

Winter 2024



**Alzheimer
Scotland**
Action on Dementia

Welcome to the Winter issue of our relaunched Newsletter! If you missed our first, Hello! I'm Catriona MacRitchie, and it is my role to oversee and manage the service here in the Western Isles.

The past six months since our Summer Issue have passed by in a flash, and we continue to be as busy as ever! From new community groups starting, lots of fundraising and awareness raising taking place to ensuring we continue to be available to support those living with dementia and their loved ones both through SOLAS, Community and Dementia Advisory Services.

Now as the Winter months have drawn in, what can often be a very joyous time can often be difficult for many as well! This year Alzheimer Scotland have launched their Wintering Well Campaign focusing on the importance of staying healthy and connected while still enjoying nature. Our monthly Whats on Guide is a great way to see what's on offer from our service and other partner organisations to support you and your loved ones to staying healthy and connected this winter.

We've also included some top tips and helpful contacts to Winter Well in the Newsletter, and you can find out more at www.alzscot.org/winter and download the very helpful Wintering Well Booklet or pop into the office to have a chat about Wintering Well.

I'd like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all those who have supported the local service through donations, volunteering and fundraising. We really could not do it without you! And to my lovely team who work extremely hard all year round to ensure that those we support receive the best possible service – Thank You! The Office, DRC and SOLAS will be closed for the festive period from 4pm on Friday 20th December and will re-open on Monday 6th January 2025 as normal. **Our free phone Dementia Helpline will be available to you however 24/7 throughout the festive period by calling 0808 800 3000 or email helpline@alzscot.org.**

We wish all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year from all at Alzheimer Scotland.



Some of the team before this year's Solas Xmas Party. (Left to Right: Catriona, Dene, Maureen, Christine and Angela).

If you have any suggestions on content, you would like to see in our next newsletter please do not hesitate to reach out to me. As always, we also welcome any comments, thoughts, feedback and suggestions regarding any of the services we offer. My contact Details are:

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TEAM SPOTLIGHT: SAY HELLO TO CHRISTINE MACLEOD, DAYCARE ORGANISER (SOLAS)

My name is Christine Macleod, and I am one of the Day Care Organisers (DCO), at Solas Day Centre. I have worked with Alzheimer's Scotland Organisation since 2013 after taking early retirement from Nursing.

My role as DCO is to ensure the smooth day to day running of the Day Centre. To make sure that during each session that there are suitable activities for those who attend. Activities range from in person or online Music, exercises and worship and prayer also chatting around the table while we have a cuppa, like a good ceilidh, playing Dominoes, knitting and reading and discussing articles in the Village Magazines.

My passion is to support the Person with Dementia, (PWD), recognise their individuality and get to know them well.

Each session is different, but one thing is guaranteed, we have good fun and lots of laughter at Solas. I have met amazing people who have so many interesting stories. It's a privilege to be involved in their lives.



Christine MacLeod (DCO) pictured here with the SOLAS Xmas Tree

SOLAS – REGISTERED DAY CENTRE - FAQs

We are very proud at Solas day centre to provide a place for people with dementia to feel safe, relaxed and supported, as well as a place to have fun. To help you or a loved one decide if SOLAS might be something you'd like to try we thought it would be helpful to list some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).



Q: What happens at SOLAS?

SOLAS offers you a chance to socialise with others while also having the opportunity to engage and take part in a variety of therapeutic activities based on yours and those who attends interests, likes and hobbies generating lots of fun and laughter. Some of these activities include Music, Games, Doggie Bingo (yes.... it's a fun as it sounds!) Arts & Crafts, Storytelling, baking, gardening, worship and prayer etc.

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Q: Who will be there with me?

Once we have processed your referral and details you can attend on your own or initially with your carer, family member or trusted friend to help you get settled. There will be up to 7 others attending with you on the same day and time each week which will help you get to know them. There will always be two members of staff there to support you and often we have Guests and Volunteers who come along as well.



Q: What are the benefits of SOLAS?

SOLAS helps those who attend to maintain their skills so that they can stay independent for as long as possible and feel good about themselves. It also helps to overcome social isolation and helps to create invaluable peer-support networks for those living with dementia and their carers and loved ones.



Q: Do you provide transport?

No, unfortunately you will need to arrange your own transport to and from SOLAS, however, please do not let this put you off enquiring as we can support with signposting potential options that maybe available to you.



Q: Can I try it first?

Off Course! We offer a free taster session (usually an hour) where you can come along with your carer, family member or trusted friend to try SOLAS, meet others who attend and the team.



Q: When is SOLAS on?

Sessions are available from 9.30am – 12.30pm or 1.30pm – 4.30pm on a Monday to Wednesday and 11am – 2pm on a Friday. SOLAS is closed on a Thursday. We typically begin with one allocated session per week (same day and time) with the opportunity to increase to 2 after your 6-week review.



Lots of fun, laughter and activities with Maureen and Christine in SOLAS

Fancy finding out more or trying SOLAS?

If you, or anyone you know, has been diagnosed with dementia and would be interested in coming along to our day centre, get in touch with one of the team on the details below for more information including arranging a taster session or email westernisles@alzscot.org.

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Maureen Macleod
Daycare Organiser
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Christine Macleod
Daycare Organiser
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AGRICULTURAL SHOWS



Information table at the Harris Agricultural Show

This year members of our team attended three Agricultural Shows over the summer months, Point, South Harris and Carloway. All the shows were very well attended by the local communities and visitors which provided us with a great opportunity to share information about our service with the public.

It also gave us an opportunity raise funds at each of the shows and in total we raised an amazing £224.94. As a charity, fundraising is vital for us to continue the work we do in and we are constantly thankful for the support we receive.

We want to make sure that no-one faces dementia alone and we encourage people to contact us at the earliest opportunity so that we can support them throughout their journey. Our service

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is also open to offering 1-2-1 information, advice and emotional support to those who have questions or concerns regarding their own or a loved one's memory and/or wish to know more about brain health and the steps you can take to look after your brain health.

We continue to offer a monthly programme of groups and events which are mostly open to all to attend and is advertised on our monthly whats on guide which you can sign up to receive automatically to your email or pick up a copy at our office or at any of our information tables, groups and events. We also offer a registered day service (SOLAS daycentre) which those living with dementia can attend to build invaluable peer-support, a chance to socialise with others, as well as providing opportunity to engage and take part in a variety of therapeutic activities, generating lots of fun and laughter.



Dementia Advisor, Angela Macleod, with an Information Table at Carloway Agricultural Show

To find out more or enquire about a service we offer, you can get in touch with us by popping in or calling our office and day centre based in Taigh Shipoirt on Sinclair Avenue in Stornoway, Isle of Lewis on 01851 70 2123. Our office is open to drop ins from 10am – 4pm, Monday to Friday. Alternatively, you can also email us on westernisles@alzscot.org.

POINT FORGET ME NOT DEMENTIA CAFE



Aonghasan and Tonkan performing at the Forget Me Not Cafe

The Forget me Not Café is a Dementia Café. It is primarily for people living with dementia and their carers, but welcomes everyone, as our aim is to build a dementia friendly community.

Community Outreach work is an important part of our work at Alzheimer's Scotland, and we want to make sure that everyone knows about our local service and that no one faces Dementia alone.

In May 2024, we approached the Point and Sandwick Trust to discuss the possibility of launching a dementia café in the Point area. We were met with enthusiasm, a positive supportive environment and a £500 donation.

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The café is now a regular feature and meets on the last Wednesday of each month in Café an Roo. The donation is used to purchase refreshments from the Café - tea's; coffee's; cake etc with the venue being provided free of charge.

We are fortunate in that local musicians have so willingly agreed to support us and for that we are hugely indebted to Angus (Aonghasan) Macdonald, John (Tonkan) Macdonald, John Masterson, Emily Dawn Lawson, Murdigan Macdonald, DB Macleod, Margo Maclean, Cathey Macarthur and Costello.

Attendance has grown steadily each month with up to 5 people living with dementia and their carers attending sessions, along with regular members of the community. At the October café we had 20 attendees, plus musicians and staff. We welcome and encourage the local community to attend as we aspire to build a dementia friendly community. Evaluation gathered from attendees at the café highlighted the warm welcome at the café and enjoyed the social aspect of meeting others and having a cuppa and singalong.



Margo Maclean performing at the Forget Me Not Cafe

We provide a variety of other groups for people living with dementia and their carers such as a walking group in Stornoway, Drop In Café in Tolsta and Bragar, and have plans to develop more in 2025.

Based on the success of the Forget me Not Dementia Café in Point, we will be launching a new Dementia Café in the Kinloch Hub in January 2025 – come and join us! If you have any ideas for new community groups which you think would be beneficial to people living with dementia and their families then please do get in touch – 01851 70 2123 or westernisles@alzscot.org.

UIST AND BARRA

In early October we were welcomed to Uist and Barra by our Partner organisations, local businesses, their staff and Volunteers, and the local communities. We held a number of Information Events, and informal meeting at An Caladh, Benbecula, Cobhair Bharraigh - Barra, Garadh a Bhagh a Tuath- Northbay, Barra, and Trianaid Care Home – Uist.

We were able to speak to local health, social care, and third sector organisations and other people in the community to offer information, advice and support, and receive feedback around the challenges and needs the community experiences.

Feedback included: -

- Mixed experiences of supporting people living with dementia.
- Unsure how to get a diagnosis

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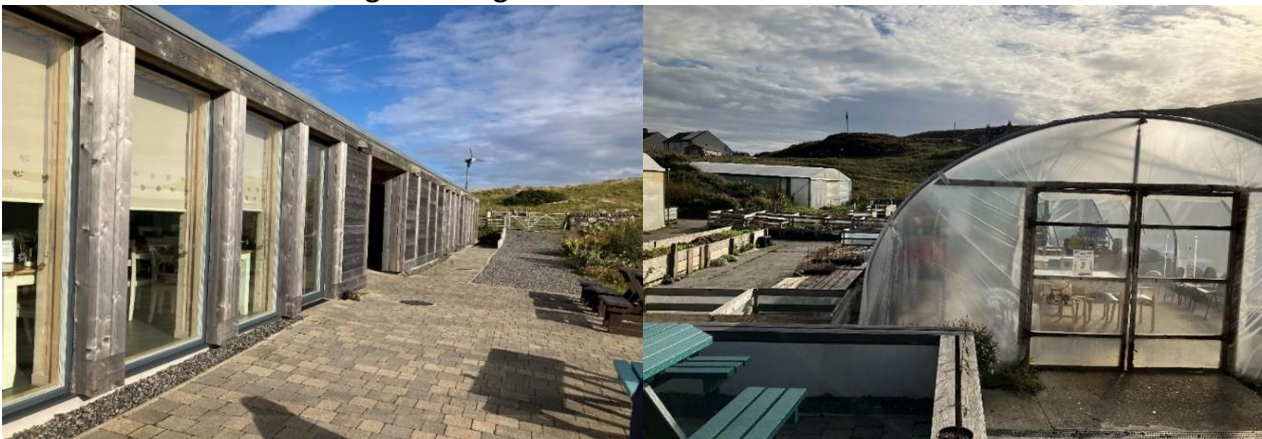
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- Interest in further support from Dementia Advisors, Carers Peer support groups, Dementia Friends Info sessions, Brain Health Awareness sessions, Community in person groups, and for more Information events
- Importance of connecting with and supporting people living with dementia with therapeutic activities meaningful to the person involved
- An interest in regular meetings to support health care staff, and the community
- Recognition and thanks for the support offered to family members by Cobhair Bharraigh

The Feedback we received will be invaluable in helping us to plan for 2025 which we hope will include more frequent visits focusing on building on the delivery of supports from our service for people living with dementia and their families throughout Uists, Barra and Vatersay.

We are very grateful in particular to the support we received in planning our visit and throughout the year from Rosie Moar PDS worker at Tagasa Uibhist – Uist; Margaret Ann Beggs – Manager/Cobhair Bharraigh, Barra; Marina Macleod – Manager/Trianaid , Uist , and Peggy MacLean, Manager & Lisann Wilson Support Worker at Garadh With support also from Daliburgh and Castlebay Co-ops, the Thrift Shop Daliburgh, Lochmaddy Arts Centre, and Lochmaddy Stores.

Furthermore, we are very grateful for the hospitality, support and engagement from the various communities and other organisations during our trip in October, despite weather challenges resulting in a delay of a day – when we were royally looked after by Margaret Ann and Peggy, and we look forward to coming down again soon.



Pictured above: Garadh a' Bhagh a' Tuath, Northbay, Café and polytunnels, Community Horticultural Support



Trianaid residents and staff with Donald MacInnes Community Activities Organiser, Alzheimer Scotland Western Isles

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ALZHEIMER SCOTLAND CONFERENCE – EDINBURGH 2024

Some members of the team attended the annual conference which was held in Edinburgh on the 20th of September 2024. This year the theme for the day was ‘Your choice, your voice, your future’ and we had a range of informative sessions and wonderful presenters.

The conference was opened by Tommy McLean (the Scottish Dementia Working Group) and Maureen Huggins (the National Dementia Carers Action Network). Tommy and Maureen shared their personal experiences - Tommy as a person with dementia and Maureen as a former carer. We had a ministerial address from Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport who joined us by video link.



Left to Right: Catriona, Maureen and Angela enjoying the Alzheimer Scotland Conference in Edinburgh.

Our Opening Session keynote speaker was Scott Mitchell, Peoples Champion, Dame Barbara Windsor Dementia Mission. Scott spoke about his life with Barbara. In 2022, the UK government announced a National Dementia Mission that Scott had helped campaign for in his late wife’s name - ‘The Dame Barbara Windsor Dementia Mission’.

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.

A summary of the key sessions were:

Session 1 Protecting personhood.

This session addressed the importance of seeing the person first and foremost, rather than the disease. Everyone has the right to remain part of their local community - to contribute and be seen as a valued citizen, regardless of their diagnosis. The session outlined the importance of personhood, dispelled misrepresentation of ‘living well with dementia’ messaging and addressed characteristics such as disability and sexual orientation that should be considered when delivering high-quality, person-centred practice.

Session 2: Practice evolutions & innovations.

Delivering high quality dementia support specific to each person’s needs has come a long way in the last 40 years. This session reflected on the 10 years since post diagnostic support was

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made a national commitment by Scottish Government, updated us on the initial year of the world’s first Brain Health Clinic, and celebrated innovative developments, such as the recently launched virtual reality football experience at Hampden Park.

Session 3: The future is green

With a vision for green spaces and social prescribing to be integrated into high quality dementia support, this session will showcase, through visual and sensory representation, the benefits of utilising outdoor spaces to support people with dementia, their family members and carers. Presenters reflected on the evidence-based learnings from Alzheimer Scotland’s first Outdoor Brain Health & Dementia Resource Centre and shared details of future plans for more outdoor facilities.

Session 4: The future of long-term care

This session provided an overview of the 16 recommendations that Alzheimer Scotland is urging Scottish Government to implement as a priority, along with an overview on the global economics and impact of long-term care for people with dementia. Alzheimer Scotland launched its ‘Commission on the Future of Long-Term Care in Scotland’ report in May 2024.

Session 5: Dementia research in Scotland

Recent press headlines have been dominated by the news of new drug developments and trials. Given the increased pace of dementia research, these kinds of headlines are hopefully just the beginning of further breakthroughs. This session addressed what has been happening in Scotland with regards to dementia research, and what the future may hold.

The team thoroughly enjoyed attending the conference and you can watch a recording of each of the above key sessions at www.alzscot.org/conference24

WINTERING WELL – HELPFUL NUMBERS AND INFORMATION	
Alzheimer Scotland Free Phone 24/7 Helpline	0808 808 3000 or email helpline@alzscot.org
Alzheimer Scotland National Dementia Advisor Service (M-F 9am – 5pm) (Closed 25 th and 26 th December and 1 st and 2 nd January 2025)	0300 373 5774 (charged at a local call rate) or email NDAS@alzscot.org
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Social Work (9am - 5pm)	01851 822708
FAIRE (Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Out of hours Service)	01851 701 702
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Keep Safe, Keep Well Winter Campaign with appendix list of more local contacts and services.	www.cne-siar.gov.uk/news/2024/keep-safe-keep-well-winter

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TOP TIPS FOR LIVING WELL WITH DEMENTIA OVER THE WINTER PERIOD




Christmas top tips for living well with dementia



- 1. Play some familiar Christmas music or reminisce over photos**
 Playing old music and looking through photo albums can help to engage those living with dementia. It also adds an extra touch to your festivities!
- 2. Put up your decorations early and slowly**
 Instead of decorating overnight, plan ahead and introduce Christmas decorations gradually. This will help the person living with dementia to feel more comfortable with the festive changes.
- 3. Spread out family visits**
 A large number of guests at one time can be overwhelming, so ask family and friends to visit you at different times over the festive period.
 If you are staying overnight with friends or family it can be helpful to make sure that rooms and hallways are safe and well-lit. Adding labels to doors for example the bathroom, can allow the person with dementia to be more independent.
- 4. Create a quiet room**
 If things do get busy, designate one room in your house as a quiet room with an armchair to doze in away from loud noise. Remember, carers need naps too.
- 5. Keep routine as familiar as possible**
 Christmas Day means a change to the usual routine, but serving meals at usual times and in familiar surroundings can help the person living with dementia feel more relaxed.
- 6. Be mindful of food**
 Christmas lunch can be daunting for someone who has difficulties eating, so try not to serve large portions.
- 7. Get outside if you can**
 Even though it is cold, make sure to wrap up warm and get some fresh air.
- 8. Take time to enjoy Christmas**
 It's important that you celebrate Christmas too, so make sure you're giving yourself time to do things you enjoy doing on Christmas Day.
- 9. Watch your diet**
 Everyone indulges at Christmas but try to ensure you're still eating enough fruit and veg per day and taking in lots of fluids.
- 10. Take time to talk**
 You don't need to face dementia alone, talk to friends about it or if you need advice or a chat with someone who understands, call the Alzheimer Scotland Freephone 24 hour Dementia Helpline 0808 808 3000.

For more information see our information sheet 'Christmas and New Year with dementia' at www.alzscot.org/



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PATRICK BROOKS AWARD – AGE SCOTLAND

“Musical Memories Harris” was nominated for, and successful in winning, the Patrick Brooks Award for Best Working Partnership at the Age Scotland event in Glasgow on Tuesday 1st October 2024.

The Patrick Brooks Award is for partnership working which has made an outstanding contribution to addressing the needs of older people in our communities. Dr Brooks, following a distinguished career in medicine, became actively involved with several health-related organisations and charities, and was on the Board of the predecessor of Age Scotland.

Three of the partners, Ellie Donnelly, Dementia Advisor, from Alzheimer Scotland, Isabel Campbell from Leverburgh Care Home and Peggy Mackay from Western Isles Community Care Forum attended the event. The remaining partners are Harris House Care Home and Mairi Maciver from Community Learning & Development at CNES. The Award also recognized the work of the “Harris Community Wheels” project which is a wheelchair accessible vehicle available for community use in Harris.

This is what Ellie had to say about the being nominated and receiving the award:

“Further to the excitement of hearing of our nomination for the Patrick Brooks Award for Best Working Partnership 2024 and then the experience of filming our Nomination video on a beautiful sunny day in Harris, we arrived in Glasgow on 1st Oct to a lovely welcome at the Awards Ceremony.

It was a wonderful day of meeting the other Nominees for the Awards, seeing their inspiring videos, the opportunity to share in the knowledge and experience of the Guest Speakers, and being welcomed and looked after by the fabulous Age Scotland staff and venue facilities.

Going on to win the Award, was a lovely acknowledgement and celebration of the over 12 years of collaboration, time, effort, and partnership working which had gone into making this monthly group a success, including the involvement of the wide range of parties involved over the years, evolving to adapt to the needs of the community the Group serves and supports”



Our Dementia Advisor, Ellie Donnelly along with Peggy Mackay from Western Isles Community Care forum and Isobel Campbell, Leverburgh Care Home having received the Patrick Brooks Award at the Age Scotland Awards.

Musical Memories Harris began initially as a monthly group at Tarbert Community Centre to support people living with dementia, travelling from their own homes or from residential care homes.

The Group evolved into taking place at a range of venues throughout Harris and being a singing/social group for people in Harris living with a long-term condition or living alone, which included people with connections travelling down from Lewis or further afield.

During Covid the group offered online sessions to continue the work of overcoming social isolation particularly during this challenging time. Latterly, Musical Memories Harris has adopted a hybrid style of delivery where sessions are alternated each month between in person or on Zoom; ensuring those who may have difficulty travelling to events or attending in person have the opportunity to remain a part of the group and benefit from the social get together and therapeutic activity of singing.

For any enquiries regards Musical Memories Harris events please contact: Peggy Mackay, Co-ordinator WICCF on 01859 502588 or email info@wiccf.co.uk or Ellie Donnelly, Dementia Adviser Alzheimer Scotland at EDonnelly@alzscot.org or Tel: - 07500 762 041

Why not enjoy the short film for yourself showcasing Musical Memories for the Age Scotland Awards 2024 - Patrick Brooks Award for Partnership Working by following this link: <https://youtu.be/lymObliEMJQ?feature=shared>

COMMUNITY GROUPS DELVIERD BY ALZHEIMER SCOTLAND

Group	Frequency	
Carers Peer Support Groups	Twice a Month	<p>For more information check out the latest Whats on Guide at www.alzscot.org/western-isles-drc</p> <p>Or contact us on: WesternIsles@alzscot.org 01851702123</p>
Walking Group	Twice a Month	
Gentle Movement & Relaxation	Twice a Month	
Bragar Drop in Cafe	Once a Month	
Tolsta Drop in Cafe	Once a Month	
Point Forget Me Not Cafe	Once a Month	
Football Memories	Once a Month	
Digital Music for Memories	Once a Month	
Digital Doggie Bingo	Once a Month	
Digital Men's Peer Support Group	Once a Month	
Digital Worship with Rev. Roddy John	Once a Month	

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MEMORY WALK 2024



On Saturday the 28th of September we hosted our first Memory Walk since before COVID-19! A total of 29 participants set off from the Stornoway Golf Club walking the beautiful scenic route from Porters Lodge to Cuddy Point and back in the Stornoway Castle Grounds with a pit stop at Cuddy Point for some refreshments and chat!

Walking together in memory of loved ones and in support of loved ones currently living with dementia, each step helped to raise awareness and vital funds for dementia with a total of £605.42 being raised for the local service. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank all who joined us and also those who helped us!



"It was lovely to see so many people young and old out walking in support of Alzheimer's Scotland, who do a fantastic job. A truly memorable walk..."

Janette and Family



"We as a family have experienced the Alzheimers journey with a loved one. due to this, it is important to us that we raise awareness for and support Alzheimer Scotland. We value the work that they do for those living with all types of dementia and their support networks..."

Angela, Nicola and Natalie walking in memory of Granny Tolsta

MORE FUNDRAISING

The O'Mac construction team working at the Scaliscro Estate on the Isle of Lewis this summer took a welcomed break to take part in Alzheimer Scotland annual 'Your Walk, Your Way' Memory Walk. As well as raising vital funds for dementia, the team also felt the benefits of workplace volunteering which in turn helps to create a positive community impact every step of the way. A Huge thank you to Mark Macdonald and the team at O'Mac Construction Limited for choosing to support Alzheimer Scotland in the Western Isles in this way! We'd also like to take the opportunity to thank Nick Clarke (Scaliscro Estate) for his generous donation towards the fundraiser and to the Volunteer Centre WI for leading and supporting the team with workplace volunteering!



VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTERS



Putting the FUN into FUN-draising



Young Sofia showing its never too early to get involved



We Simply cannot do it without you!
To all our volunteers, fundraisers and supporters, a massive Thank You from all at Alzheimer Scotland!

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**Alzheimer
Scotland**
Action on Dementia

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
or by phone: **01851 702123**

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WORDSEARCH

M D F J K L T S Y O F I S V F C Y Q L C
 C E Q D R R V K O D O G G Y B I N G O A
 X Q M B W K A M D L T G W Y X N H Z J A
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 U C D W W H M E Q F B W S V W I X I W B
 B Z X I M Q F T H T X S A B S M L X C W

Can you find all 10 words?

BRAIN HEALTH
 DEMENTIA
 PREVENTION
 NATURE WALKS
 DOGGY BINGO

MEMORY
 LIVE WELL
 SOLAS
 FOOTBALL MEMORIES
 MUSIC

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 Shiphoirt, Sinclair Avenue, Stornoway, HS12AP

Telephone: 01851 70 2123

Email: WesternIsles@alzscot.org

Office and Dementia Resource Centre Open: Monday to Friday 10am – 4pm

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Dementia Advisor

Tel: 07500762041

edonnelly@alzscot.org

Angela Macleod
Dementia Advisor

Tel: 07584607581

amacleod@alzscot.org

Registered Day Care Service (SOLAS) – By Referral Only: Open Mon, Tues, Wed & Fri

Maureen Macleod
Daycare Organiser

Tel: 01851 706767

mmacleod@alzscot.org

Christine Macleod
Daycare Organiser

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You can also find out more information at our website on www.alzscot.org or contact our free 24/7 Dementia helpline 0808 808 3000 or by emailing helpline@alzscot.org

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 donate, please consider donating to our local Just Giving page <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising>

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

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