



EVALUATION REPORT 2020

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY FIFE



What is a Dementia Friendly Community?

The Alzheimer's Society defines a Dementia Friendly Community as "a city, town or village where people with dementia are understood, respected and supported...and are empowered to have high aspirations and feel confident knowing they can contribute and participate in activities that are meaningful to them" (Alzheimer's Society website <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-involved/dementia-friendly-communities/what-dementia-friendly-community>). Dementia Friends Scotland is an Alzheimer Scotland initiative to raise awareness of dementia and reduce the stigma that surrounds the condition.

Individuals living with dementia, their family members and friends can become afraid to go out into the world and thus face social isolation. This may happen because of a loss of confidence or fear that something 'bad' will happen. Raising awareness of dementia in the local community and providing training to individuals and businesses can allow people living with dementia, their families and friends to venture outside secure in the knowledge that they will be safe, cared for and understood.

Gerry King, a person living with early onset dementia who is an integral part of Dementia Friendly Fife underlines this, "Personally, Dementia Friendly communities just means being aware of your situation and not so much treating you any different than anybody else but just being aware that if something goes wrong, there are reasons for it." On the importance on being 'friendly' Gerry adds, "For people with dementia, every day is an adventure, every day is different, you could be good one day and bad the next day and I don't want to be treated different from anybody else."

Meet the Project Manager



Ruth McCabe, Project Manager

"Ruth McCabe was employed by Fife Health and Social Care Partnership in 2018 as the Project Manager for Dementia Friendly Fife. She has proved herself to be a caring and energetic networker, a guiding light and an inspiration to us all throughout."

Maggie Ellis, University of St Andrews.

“

The Dementia Friendly Fife Project has been a joy to deliver. The whole Kingdom have opened their hearts to it and we really have changed attitudes towards the condition. This has been possible through the courage of members of the STAND group to tell their stories of living with dementia. They have been honest about the challenges and overwhelmingly positive that life can go on meaningfully beyond a diagnosis.

Ruth McCabe, Project Manager

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Format of Report

This report represents the collaboration between Fife Health and Social Care Partnership, Alzheimer Scotland and the University of St Andrews and their work on developing and evaluating Dementia Friendly Fife. A research team from the School of Psychology & Neuroscience at the University of St Andrews has worked throughout the summer of 2020 conducting online interviews with key stakeholders in the project. Unfortunately, COVID-19 prevented face-to-face interviews, putting the evaluation on hold for several months. The resulting report was written by the research team and Ruth McCabe - Project Manager. We hope that what you read here is representative of the effort, co-operation and general good feeling that has been generated by the project.

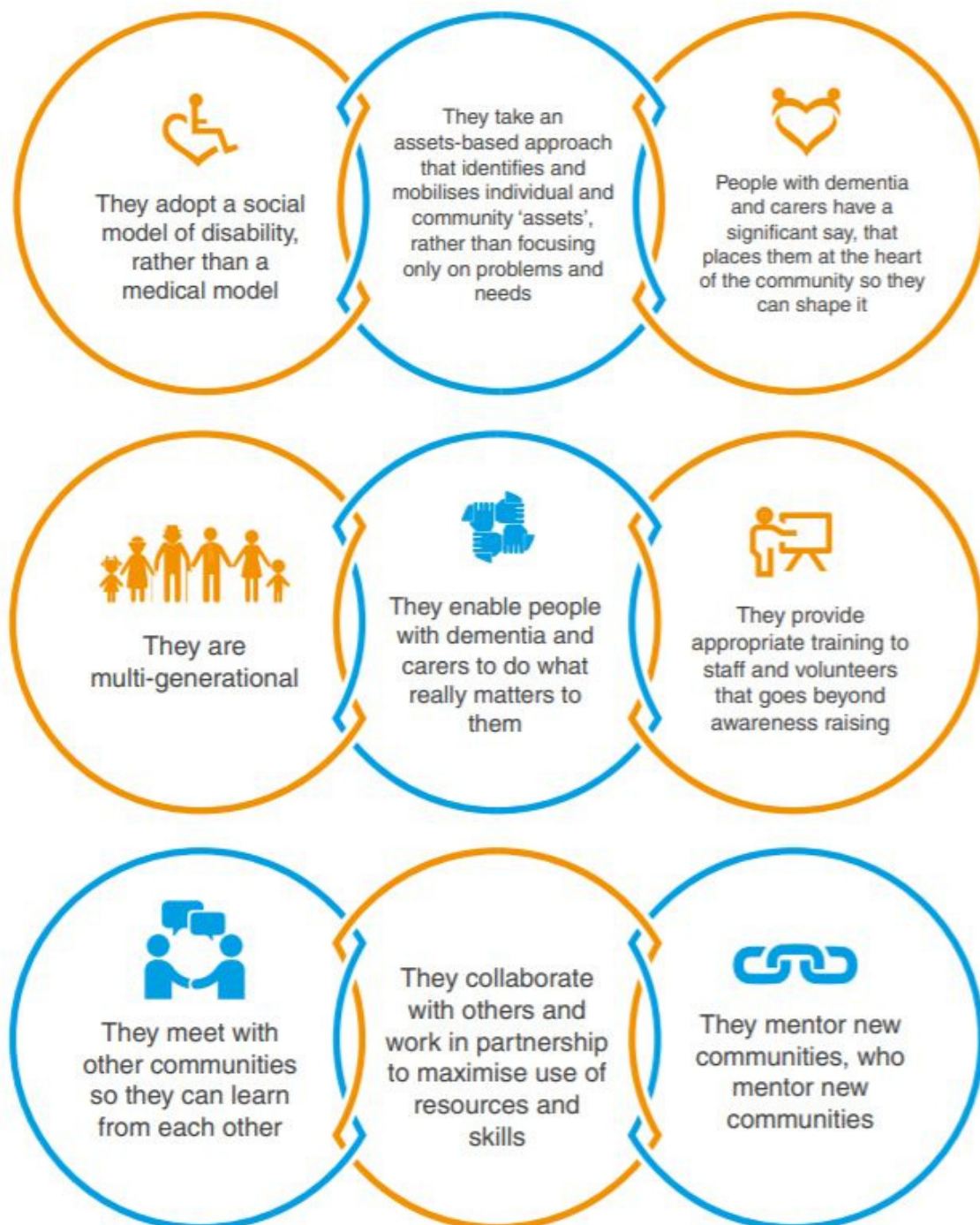
Structure

The report is structured so as to tell the story of the Dementia Friendly Fife Project within an established framework. The Life Changes Trust recently produced a very helpful 'Dementia Friendly Communities Toolkit' listing nine principles emerging from four years of evaluation work with Dementia Friendly Communities. The evaluation was conducted and the report written using these principles as a guide to highlight the most significant elements of the project whilst minimising subjectivity. A schematic of the nine principles is shown on the next page and a description of each principle is included at the beginning of the corresponding sections.

The first section of the report on 'Numbers' written by Ruth McCabe outlines the project in terms of statistics, i.e. number of Dementia Friends created, number of businesses trained, etc. These figures are key markers of the success of the project and serve to illustrate the huge effort that has gone into it. The sections following 'Numbers' list each of the principles of successful Dementia Friendly Communities in turn. Following this, sections on the 'Impact of Covid-19' and 'Legacy and Future' are also included. These sections provide examples of each heading and contain quotes from individuals who were kind enough to give us their time for interview. We would like to thank each and every person involved in the project as a whole and to those who gave us their personal insights on the process and impact of Dementia Friendly Fife.

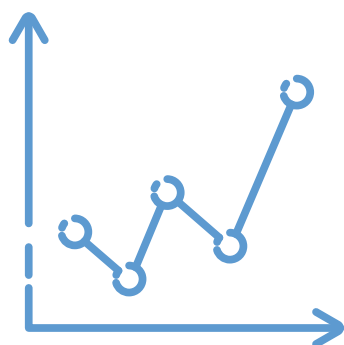
Evaluation Principles

Dementia Friendly Communities work best when:



Life Changes Trust, accessed March, 2020.

Numbers



Project statistics

In two years:

- **301** organisations that have received the Dementia Friendly Fife award
- **154** hour-long face-to-face sessions delivered to **2035** individuals
- 76 generic presentations given to groups reaching **1233** individuals
- **12** Information Stands gleaning **319** meaningful contacts

Particular successes:

Involvement of people living with a diagnosis of dementia and their families and friends: has been a key aspect of the Project and there are around 20 individuals shaping the work in a variety of ways.

St Andrews: had already been working towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Town for three years before the Fife-wide Project came in to place. It was being driven by St Andrews University academic Dr Maggie Ellis, a student society and a local family who had lived experience of younger onset dementia. They have continued to drive the initiative forward with the Dementia Friendly Fife Project Manager delivering face-to-face Dementia Friends sessions. To date, 27 organisations in St Andrews have received the award.

Numbers

Masonic Lodges: Leuchars, Markinch, Kelty, Methil and the Rothes Lodge in Leslie have all qualified for the award and 108 members of Lodges across the Kingdom have become Dementia Friends. Training has now been provided to 20 of the 39 lodges (about 160 participants in total). As a result, 3 members have felt comfortable enough to share their diagnosis of dementia and can now be offered appropriate support.

Churches: 12 churches now have the award with several working towards it. The Project Manager has also been able to market the new Faith In Older People Guide to supporting churches to become Dementia Friendly. This is called 'One Step At A Time' and was formally launched on the 17th September, 2019. Several people from Fife attended the launch and are now using the resource at a local level.



Kingdom Housing and Ore Valley Housing: have released 59 of their staff across all their departments to take the hour long face-to-face Dementia Friends session. This is a significant investment. They have also made a very strong connection with the Dementia Services Development Centre at Stirling University and are working with the architects there to ensure that any of their future builds are Dementia Friendly. They have very generously provided funds to support a print run of the recently developed travel leaflet and have also funded the provision of 3000 copies of the virtual Dementia Friends DVD (see page 16).

Nationwide Building Society: all the Branches across the Kingdom, including the Call Centre in Pitreavie, have invested in the hour long face-to-face session for staff. 98 employees were enabled to become Dementia Friends through this process. This represents a significant investment in a very high-pressured industry.

Numbers

COOP Funeral Care: all the Branches across the Kingdom have become involved in the project and all the staff have become Dementia Friends online.

Political Engagement: all the Local Government Councillors in Fife have made the commitment to become Dementia Friends through taking the online course. Dementia Friends programmes can be accessed by staff in both the Westminster and Scottish Parliaments through initiatives by the Alzheimer Society in England and Alzheimer Scotland.

Fife Council Care Homes For Older People: all have been visited, assessed and given the award. The standards of care are exceptionally person-centred and the quality and approach of staff is both excellent and innovative.



Working with the Voluntary Sector: many of the third sector organisations could have been given the award as they are naturally Dementia Friendly and very person-centred in their delivery. However many have chosen to participate in the training either on line or in face-to-face sessions. The numbers participating in the Alzheimer Scotland Annual Memory Walk doubled this year and it may be that the significant number of newly registered Dementia Friends in Fife contributed to this.

Working with the Fife Cultural Trust: the Trust have appointed a member of their team as a lead individual to support all their facilities and services to become Dementia Friendly. Their lead person for Dementia, Samantha MacDougall, Service Development Officer for Libraries said, "Since the project started, six of our venues are now Dementia Friendly (Roths Halls, Cadham, Leslie, Rosyth, Burntisland and Carnegie Hall) and over 100 staff members have become Dementia Friends."

Numbers

Working with our Colleagues in Health: the team of Allied Health Professionals across the Kingdom have embraced the Project in a variety of ways. For example, 30 Occupational Therapists took an hour to become Dementia Friends in a face-to-face session. Many more have taken the course online.

Connecting with Primary Care Teams: the most significant success in this area has been engagement with Community Nursing staff in the Kirkcaldy area. Three sessions were held for this team resulting in 18 Dementia Friends.

Dementia Awareness Week: was held between the 3rd – 7th June 2019 and was celebrated in a variety of ways across the Kingdom. Many organisations dressed their facilities in purple. The Macedonia Action Group created banners that they dispersed across Glenrothes to raise awareness of the condition.

Public Transport Leaflet: This was inspired originally by the Glenrothes Participation and Engagement Group. The issue with public transport is that it is difficult to access and understand the information about what is available. The group requested a paper based information leaflet. The production of this was a partnership with Fife Council, people with lived experience of dementia, the local Health Council and the Police Scotland Safer Travel Officer for Fife. It was a year in the making and has resulted in a very useful resource. Kingdom Housing have very generously given funds to print 2000 of these. It will be available in electronic format as well as being located on Fife Direct.

St Andrews Leaflet: During the Glenrothes Project at the behest of people living with a diagnosis of dementia and their carers an information leaflet had been created that listed all the specialist providers of dementia services and other agencies that provide more generic but still relevant support. This has proven to be exceptionally useful and a steering group in St Andrews, which includes people with lived experience of the condition felt it would be useful to emulate this work. This is now available in paper and electronic format.

Social Model



Dementia Friendly Communities work best when:

1. They "adopt a social model of disability, rather than a medical model."



Dance session hosted by the University of St Andrews & Dementia Friendly St Andrews during Dementia Awareness Week, 2018.

Dementia has traditionally been perceived from a medical perspective. The Medical model focuses on progressive decline consisting of increases in cognitive impairment and decreasing ability to complete activities of daily living. In other words the Medical approach focuses on impairments. This model minimises the individuality of people living with dementia as they are regarded only in terms of their illness. The Social model of dementia can be considered to be the opposite of the medical perspective. Used to provide a framework for identifying retained skills across the course of illness progression, the Social model explores how these can be maximized to best support people with dementia.

Social Model

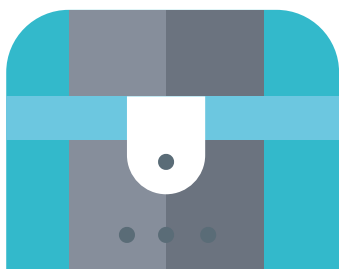
As such, this approach represents a focus on the personal experience of the individual living with dementia. From the Social perspective, the person is no longer seen as a 'patient', is regarded as a whole, addressing their psychological and social needs. The Social model is at the heart of Dementia Friendly Fife. People living with dementia are regarded as individuals with important skills and knowledge to offer. This Social approach is central to the work that Ruth does and in the way in which she has included individuals living with dementia in the training and education of others.

Melanie McGill – Community Mental Health Nurse for Older Adults covering North East Fife commented on the support she has received from the Dementia Friendly Fife programme, "Dementia Friendly Fife has provided invaluable resources and contacts that I can pass onto my patients in the local area and beyond." Many of these involve providing methods of social contact and peer support for individuals living with dementia in the area.

An example of such a group is an Early Onset Alzheimer's peer support group which participants have called "STAND" (Striving Towards A New Day). The group was initially set up Maggie Simpson (NHS Young Onset Dementia Nurse) and Ruth McCabe. The group has gone from strength to strength since its formation most recently working with the UK network of dementia voices, DEEP (Dementia Engagement and Empowerment Project) in collaboration with the Life Changes Trust to develop a virtual Dementia Friends session for release on DVD.

A care partner from the STAND group commented on the social connection and support provided to her husband by the group, "He's got somebody with him there all the time. They are all just treated normally I think that is really important to hang on to isn't it, to know that it is actually those skills that you still have regardless of the disease and being able to kind of have those opportunities." Echoing this point Gerry said "I was really devastated when I first had the diagnosis but actually it's about finding new activities and the new things you can offer that are incredibly important."

Assets Approach



Dementia Friendly Communities work best when:

1. They "take an assets-based approach that identifies and mobilises individual and community 'assets', rather than focusing only on problems and needs".



Vintage Fashion Show run by members of the University of St Andrews Dementia Friendly Student Society.

Just as the Social model does for individuals living with dementia, the Assets approach focuses on and maximises the positives and resources that exist within the community, rather than on problems. With regard to Dementia Friendly Fife, this has sometimes involved introducing people living with dementia to 'naturally' Dementia Friendly rather than dementia-specific activities and resources. People with dementia confided in Ruth that inclusion for them often means participating in existing activities/assets rather than creating dementia-specific resources. This point is directly related to the sustainability of the project as it is simpler and more cost-effective to modify existing resources to accommodate individuals with dementia than it is to develop novel ones.

Assets Approach

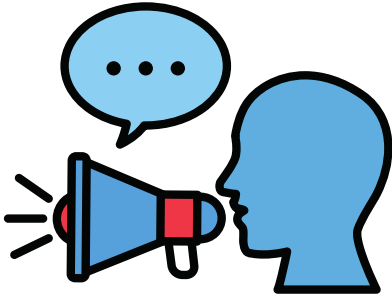
This point was underlined by Fiona Prendergast, Wellbeing and Programming Manager of Fife Sports & Leisure Trust, “So thinking about sustainability we were trying to bring those people into our group classes rather than anything dementia-specific because it was clear from the feedback that people were keen for, just to be involved in normal classes, normal settings.”

Another example of the Assets approach can be seen in maximising the potential of the student population of St Andrews. The town hosts a cohort of 9000 students from all over the globe, many of whom are keen to participate in voluntary activities. A Dementia Friendly Student Society was set up in 2016 in order to raise awareness of the condition within the local and student population in St Andrews. Amongst other activities, the group have organised three vintage fashion shows over the years raising funds for Dementia Friendly St Andrews.



The Virtual Dementia Experience Tour Bus in St Andrews, 2019. This was funded by monies raised by Dementia Friendly St Andrews volunteers.

Having a say



Dementia Friendly Communities work best when:

3. "People with dementia and carers have a significant say, that places them at the heart of the community so they can shape it".



The team at Kennoway Community Shed receiving their Dementia Friends awards.

As mentioned previously in this report, Dementia Friendly Fife puts individuals living with dementia at the centre of the work with over 20 people with a diagnosis and their family members feeding into and shaping the Project. An example of this involvement can be seen within the training aspect of Ruth's work. Gerry King from the STAND group has become a key figure in the Project, helping Ruth to deliver Dementia Friends sessions across Fife. Gerry and Ruth have also trained a cohort of University of St Andrews Senior Honours 'Psychology of Dementia' students and provided them with invaluable personal insight into the condition.

Having a say

Another example of people with dementia 'Having a Say' in the Project came from involvement with Fife Forum. Fife Forum is a Voluntary Sector Agency that provides information and advice on issues that affect largely older people. Fife Forum provides Elderly Forums, User Panels, Local Area Co-ordination and Advocacy. Anne Hinojosa of Fife Forum said, "As a User Panel Facilitator, the impact on the services I provide and also my panel members have been really positive. Ruth came around every panel. I have eight in total across Fife and gave talks to my panel members, most of whom are over 70 years of age with health and safety issues, some of my members are at the early stages of dementia. The panel members were able to share their experiences with Ruth, on how they felt local businesses were dealing with this issue, Ruth a made note of shops/businesses in the area where she could visit. We also discussed the effects of dementia both on the individual and the people around them."

Perhaps the most significant example of people living with dementia 'Having a Say' in Fife is via the 'virtual' Dementia Friends DVD made by the STAND group. The content is exceptionally powerful as it involves the testimonies of 3 people living with younger onset dementia. The key points are made through their stories. The session can be accessed at this link: <https://youtu.be/TdTGx1axALw>



A still taken from the virtual Dementia Friends training DVD produced by the STAND group.

Multigenerational



**Dementia Friendly Communities
work best when:**
4. "They are multi-generational."

Educating children and young people about dementia is key to sustaining the impact of the Project in the coming years. There are many examples of the multi-generational nature of Dementia Friendly Fife, not least of which is the educational/training element of the project. For example, Ruth and Gerry delivered Dementia Friends training to a class of primary 7 pupils of Leslie Primary School in March, 2020. Irene Donaldson was also involved in the sessions with schools. She was an integral part of the success of these sessions as her background is in education. She was a Deputy Head Teacher before she had to retire because of her diagnosis of dementia.



Dementia Friendly Fife's first ever Dementia Friends session for young people. These are children from the P7 class at Leslie Primary School photographed in March this year just before lock down.

Multigenerational

St Andrews teenager, Maisie Dury has lived experience of dementia as her grandfather Jack Haines lived with Early Onset Dementia for 13 years. Maisie has helped Ruth to deliver a number of Dementia Friends sessions across Fife along with her mother Vanessa and grandmother Lesley. This approach to training provides a powerful view of the condition from the perspectives of three generations of family members. The personal experience of dementia brought to life in these sessions has brought a genuine and moving element to the training.

A further example of the multigenerational work in Dementia Friendly Fife can be seen in the example of the 'Busy Bee' nursery in Kinglassie. A team of young children from the nursery worked with the whole village to inspire it to become Dementia Friendly. The Busy Beez are supported by Catherine Sala who runs Kat's Mission, a charity shop and hub, in the village.



A 'Busy Bee' helping with Dementia Friends training.

Enabling



Dementia Friendly Communities work best when:

5. "They enable people with dementia and carers to do what really matters to them."



Ketron Morrison, the Minister and the session clerk receiving the Dementia Friendly Fife award at Hope Park and Martyr's Church.

Continued participation in personally meaningful activities in the face of a dementia diagnosis can be challenging. As such, it is essential that Dementia Friendly Communities strive to create circumstances under which hobbies and personal interests can continue to feature in the lives of those living with the condition. The capacity to stay connected with activities and friends is key to the maintenance of a sense of self and personhood for everyone.

Enabling

A good example of how this has been brought about in Fife is via engagement with local churches. Religious faith is an integral part of the lives of many individuals and as such it is extremely important to engage with faith groups in Dementia Friendly Communities. Church environments for example can often be made more Dementia Friendly with minimum modification. Hope Park and Martyr's Church in St Andrews was awarded Dementia Friendly status by Ruth last year.

Taking part in exercise is central to both physical and mental health. As such, finding safe ways to keep individuals living with dementia engaged in sport and physical activity is essential to maintaining wellbeing in Dementia Friendly Communities. Talking about the Dementia Friendly Fife Award Fiona Prendergast, Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator for Fife Sports and Leisure Trust said, "It was a great way to showcase what we can do because we have got really safe venues for people to come to, whereas maybe people who have post-diagnostic support wouldn't have considered a leisure centre. It kind of made people more aware of our spaces and how friendly they were...The person with dementia might need more support, we felt we needed two instructors in the class. We tried to target classes that were smaller, so that the groups maybe were more suitable for those with dementia. Stacey would phone the families and have a conversation before they came to class. She also supported a couple of people who wanted to go swimming. So she would meet them at the pool, help them get set up, introduce them to reception. So she would maybe do that over two or three times and step back."

Anne Hinojosa from Fife forum commented further on enabling environments, "As a resident of the Glenrothes area, I also noticed changes in the physical environments of many of the businesses and organisations that I visited. The project not only helped to improve the physical environment of these areas, it also raised awareness of the illness itself and its impact on the person and any carers. The project advocated for positive change in both environments and attitudes, which will have benefits for many members of the community with physical or mental health issues, not just those with dementia."

Training



Dementia Friendly Communities work best when:

6. "They provide appropriate training to staff and volunteers that goes beyond awareness raising."



Students at Fife College after their Dementia Friends training.

The provision of Dementia Friends training is perhaps the most demanding element of creating a Dementia Friendly Community. Ruth has now trained over a thousand individuals across Fife in face-to-face sessions. Involving individuals with lived experience of dementia in these training sessions has brought an element of personal insight that goes well beyond awareness raising. Through sharing their experiences - both positive and negative - people with dementia, their families and friends have helped to bring the training to life. Trainees often comment on how much is brought to the sessions via the generosity of people who share their stories.

Training

People living with dementia have also taken part in the training of both organisations and individuals. Members of the STAND group have facilitated 34 sessions alongside Ruth across the Kingdom. This involvement represents a significant achievement for individuals living with dementia and Dementia Friendly Fife as a whole.

On the breadth of the training Anne Hinojosa of Fife Forum said, "I think Dementia Friendly has been a very valuable campaign as the training has been spread out far and wide to so many different organisations and services that might have previously never considered training their staff in such areas. The talks gave myself and the panel members a greater awareness of the issues that affect people living with dementia."

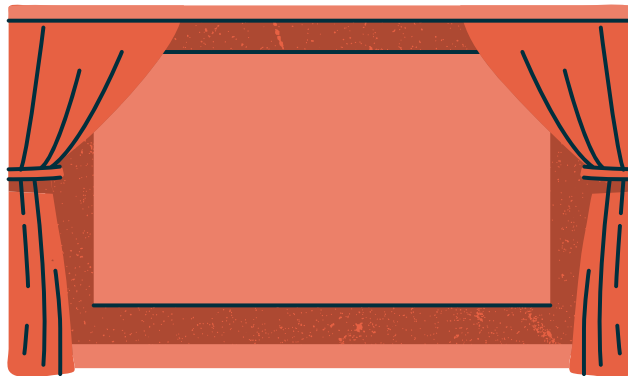
In order to achieve Dementia Friendly Status organisations are offered an environmental assessment of their premises and the staff and volunteers are invited to become Dementia Friends. Environmental assessments consider access, wayfinding, signage and the use of colours. The advice that is given mostly is to use bold, plain and contrasting colours and fabrics, to create signage that is a mix of pictures and words and to install coloured toilet seats. Some organisations respond to the guidance immediately and make changes. For others where corporate identity or financial constraints are an issue it is accepted that changes can be made over time. On environment and training Fiona Prendergast said, "Environments were quite a big learning curve, the use of signage and colours, making places like shops, businesses, pubs and theatres, etc. more dementia friendly. It was reassuring to know that staff within these businesses were also receiving training."

She added, "So the work we kind of started on was we got a lot of our staff trained on Age Scotland dementia friends training and then we also they did a trainers course" "her role would be to make sure all our centres were dementia friendly and we worked with Ruth McCabe. So we put our own temporary signage up, we managed, we said we would try and train about 60% of our staff and we are ongoing. Most of our centres have now been badged as dementia friendly. "

Training

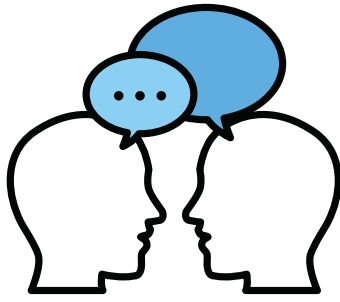
The focus in the face-to-face sessions is to emphasise that dementia is not a natural part of ageing, it is an illness like any other, it is nothing to be ashamed of and people can live well with it particularly in the early stages of the illness. The emphasis is on diagnosis of the condition as early as possible and that people can be empowered through accessing information at a local level and the support and guidance of the NHS staff who provide Post Diagnostic Support.

Talking of the significance of the training to his staff, Logistics Manager of Co-op Funeral Care Kenny Mclachlan said, "Since all of our Co-op Funeral Care branches across Fife became Dementia Friendly and our colleagues Dementia Friends, our awareness and understanding of the condition has increased greatly, colleagues are now able to identify where we can adapt our style of client service to suit the needs of people who are living with Dementia. This has been a wonderful initiative for Fife and one that we have been proud to be able to support."



Jan McTaggart of the Byre Theatre, St Andrews spoke to us about the impact that the training has had on her staff and customers, "We really like our customers and we know from talking to them that many are affected by dementia – either living with it themselves or with friends and family who are affected. Therefore, with reference to training, it was really useful to learn more about some of the causes and effects of dementia. We undertook additional training too, to increase our understanding of how we can support our customers and visitors who are living with dementia. The training increased our confidence in working with people living with dementia, meaning that we could programme specially adapted events, Dementia Friendly and relaxed performances."

Meet with other communities



Dementia Friendly Communities work best when:

7. "They meet with other communities so they can learn from each other."

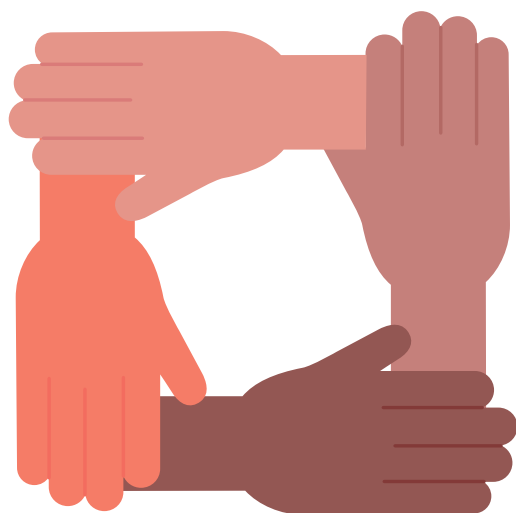


Ruth, Andy, Eleanor and Ian at the Masked ball in the CISWO Club in Glenrothes.

Ruth has worked closely with Lesley Henderson of West Fife Presbytery. Of their Dementia Friendly plan Lesley said, "The first thing we wanted to do was hold a day conference with speakers, training and group of exhibitors involved in supporting and caring for those living with dementia... I met with various contacts including Ruth McCabe whose input was invaluable in helping to pull together and involving Alzheimer Scotland and support groups such as Deep/Tide. It was a very successful day with over 100 attendees allowing experiences to be shared together with resources that allowed a better understanding and practical help."

Meet with other communities

She continued, "Many of the third sector organisations could have been given the award as they are naturally dementia friendly and very person-centred in their delivery. However many have chosen to participate in the training either on line or in face to face sessions. We have become mutual sign-posters to and advocates for each others services. It is hoped that our "togetherness" helps people living with the condition to access a holistic range of supports and look beyond the "Council" to provide services. One of the key relationships has been with Alzheimer Scotland and it is hoped that the Dementia Friendly Fife Project has raised awareness about the services they provide across the Kingdom and for their fundraising requirements. The numbers participating in their annual memory walk doubled this year and it may be that the significant number of newly registered dementia friends in Fife contributed to this."



Gail McLeod, Service Manager for Fife said to Ruth, "Having you in this role is like having an extra member of our team flying the flag for awareness and I am very conscious of you sign posting people to Alzheimer Scotland which is fantastic. I am aware of you contributing and trying to get people involved in our active voice events and the memory walk as well as our groups. However, as we don't record where people heard of our services it's difficult to say what impact this has had, but it is comforting knowing that you are out there knocking doors, making these connections and spreading the word."

Collaborate



Dementia Friendly Communities work best when:

8. "They collaborate with others and work in partnership to maximise use of resources and skills."



The team at the Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum in Dunfermline receiving their certificates after Dementia Friends training.

Collaboration has been one of many strong points of Dementia Friendly Fife. Here, Ruth's networking and relationship-building skills have really come into their own. An example of this can be seen in the partnership Ruth developed with 'Paths for All', an organisation that supports Health Walk groups across Scotland. These groups help to support those who are inactive to take a step back into physical activity, creating social connections in the process.

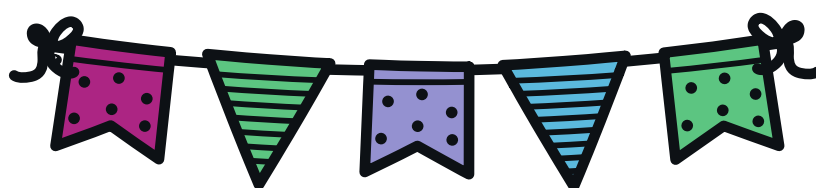
Collaborate

Nicole Bell of Paths for All said, "The existence of the Dementia Friendly Fife work has enabled us to make local connections, provide funding to a local organisation to address a gap [which has resulted in] the training of local people in how to lead Health Walks safely. I attended this first meeting with the hope of establishing a Health Walk in St Andrews with local partners so that older adults, and the wider community, could benefit from the provision of a free, led walk as there was a gap in provision for an organised low-level walk. The meeting had the desired effect and a successful bid for funding was made by local organisation, Pilgrim Care.

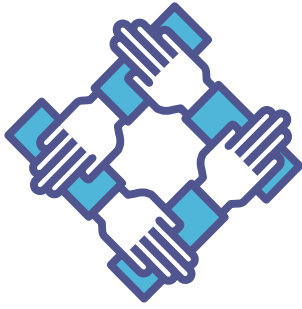


A production of Dementia Friendly play, *The Curious Shoes*, represented a collaboration between Dementia Friendly Fife and Dementia Friendly St Andrews. The production was funded by monies raised by volunteers of Dementia Friendly St Andrews.

Jan McTaggart, Byre Theatre on collaboration said, "Dementia Friendly Fife offered opportunities for us to network, gaining a sense of the context we are working in, who is working on what, where and who they are working with. Sharing experiences and knowledge plays an essential role in providing a meaningful service, avoiding overlaps and duplication and supporting each other. The expertise in the group is exceptional, ensuring that discussion was always useful and based on the best and latest research and intelligence."



Mentoring



Dementia Friendly Communities work best when:

9. "They mentor new communities, who mentor other new communities."



Gerry, Andy Morris and PC Graeme Walker on a dementia friendly assesement visit to Glenrothes Bus Station.

Mentoring within the Dementia Friendly Fife project has been less about facilitating other Dementia Friendly communities and more about helping major services in the region to meet Dementia Friendly standards. This has not only been achieved through the work that Ruth has done but also via members of the STAND group. On teaching businesses about dementia as they go Edward said, "I let everyone know that you have to be a lot more patient with people with dementia and most people understand and quite a lot of them remember. Supermarkets for instance were one bugbear to start with and they could not understand you had to go in with your wife because you could not leave her outside."

Mentoring

He added, "During Covid they said one person, one trolley sort of thing but we got over that and it was okay but like I said the initial thing is you know this is a policy you must follow but every policy has exceptions so I am glad to say that they are taking it on board like I said most people are amenable to change. They say people don't like to change. I say people do like change they just don't like being changed said my wife has a disability and she was actually wearing a lanyard and they didn't even know what it was, but they do now."



On mentoring the wider community, Anne Hinojosa of Fife Forum said, "As the project began to spread to the wider Fife area, I always kept Ruth in mind when in contact with community groups and partner agencies. As I had completed the Dementia Friends training, I could confidently explain the benefits of it to groups leaders. This resulted in many seeking to also complete training and have assessments of their physical environments. This was of benefit to both my client group and the wider community."



On helping other communities to become Dementia Friendly, Free Mason Grand Master Stewart Quigley said, "I'm finding as well, because of my position, provincial grand masters meet up every so often, have a meeting just to talk about what happens with everyone's brethren. And it's amazing, even then, a lot of them have said to them, what is happening in Fife and Kinross, they've come to me to say I've heard what you're doing in Kinross, in dealing with dementia. It just shows you how it gets out there. They are keen to come on with this as well."

Impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 has had a major impact on Dementia Friendly Communities across the UK. Dementia Friendly Fife came to a halt in March when lockdown was announced but only in terms of face-to-face gatherings and interactions. Speaking of the impact of COVID, Lesley Henderson of West Fife Presbytery said, "All work has stopped. The funding has been temporarily stopped until a financial impact and well-being assessment of all the churches within West Fife has been collated. It's been difficult to navigate the changes as church buildings have not fully opened and are restricted in numbers and type of worship allowed." Melanie McGill, Community Mental Health Nurse added, "COVID has impacted greatly on how we can support those with dementia as many organisations had to close especially lifelines such as day services have noticed the deterioration in those with dementia as well as receiving significantly more referrals from not just health and social care but third parties too."

Anne Hinojosa of Fife Forum said, "The lockdown, due to COVID-19, has radically changed how I currently work. Prior to lockdown, the bulk of my work was face-to-face contact with individuals and families. Contact with clients is now by phone only. Most of the organisations that I would previously have referred people to are also closed or are offering telephone support only. Many of the people I have been in contact with are feeling isolated and anxious. These are worrying times for both individuals and families who may not be able to visit loved ones."

Despite the difficulties currently faced, local groups and associations have been keeping in contact online and many safety measures have been put in place in recent weeks to facilitate the reintroduction of in-person activities. For example, Nicole Bell from 'Paths for All' is currently supporting her walkers via buddy walking opportunities and keeping in contact by phone. Melanie McGill, Community Mental Health Nurse offers telephone, emails and video calls to those who can access them. She adds, "Everyone has been working hard and will continue to adapt and try to keep supporting the best we can."

Legacy & Future

The funding for the the Dementia Friendly Fife Project comes to an end in October, 2020. Our final question to interviewees addressed the sustainability of the Project and how it will continue. Melanie McGill, Community Mental Health Nurse remarked, "Even if it could be extended to ensure the legacy can be kept going in the community areas especially those in remote areas, then that would be a great achievement as it has placed a needed focus on dementia and how people can live well in their own community."

Above all, the main concern about the Project coming to an end was the loss of Ruth. Members of the STAND group were particularly vocal about this as Fionna said, "Ruth is one in a million. She is a good lady and her husband as well. She makes it great for us. She should get a medal." Gerry and Trish remarked, "When Ruth retires later on, it will be a massive loss not just to Fife, in general, it's going to be a huge. huge loss."

Hillary commented, "The biggest thing was meeting Ruth and getting involved with her because I met her at the open day at the golf club and she was telling me who to speak to cause I had only been in Leslie a few weeks maybe a few months and everything was so strange. She always seems to go that extra mile, nothing is too much trouble, if you're having a problem getting to a place you know, cause I don't drive, she says "I'll come and pick you up, there's no problem and she always makes you feel like you are not being a burden she says, "oh, come on, you'll enjoy it" and I think that is so important that she gives us that bit of confidence to carry on doing things."

Linda and Robert echoed this depth of feeling in saying, "We need people like Ruth to help people that are in a similar situation, 'cause we don't know what's out there, there's still a lot of learning to be done, we need people like Ruth. Linda & Robert commented, "Ruth and Maggie (Simpson) are both doing a fantastic job with us. They include us in the group, and we have been out a couple of times with Ruth which has been really good."

Legacy & Future

Anne Hinojosa of Fife Forum added, "I mention Ruth by name specifically, rather than "the project", as I feel the amazing work that has been done is due to her energy, empathy and tenacity. Ruth clearly has a passion for the project and a genuine interest in making Fife a more inclusive and kinder community. She excels at networking and has proved invaluable at being able to identify services, that may be of benefit to our clients, and passing this information on to colleagues from partner agencies. I always felt confident, when making introductions to partner organisations, that Ruth had the experience, wisdom and patience to use the opportunity to increase awareness and bring about change in a meaningful way."

Speaking of the legacy of the Project, Fiona Prendergast of Fife Leisure commented, "I think the legacy is that certainly all the partners that were round the table have dementia at the forefront and for many of them it probably was anyway but maybe for me speaking from a leisure trust point of view and maybe from a cultural trust I think its something that will be embedded." Jan McTaggart of the Byre Theatre, St Andrews regards the legacy of Dementia Friendly Fife to be, "the network, the skills learned, and the knowledge shared. This has been of enormous value. We hope to continue to liaise with Maggie Ellis and hope that a level of work is still possible. However, I fear that the loss of Dementia Friendly Fife will lead to a rapid loss of momentum and a dissipation of focus on the needs of the people around us who live with Dementia."

Stewart Quigley, Masonic grand Master added, "We've spoken about that (the legacy) amongst myself and Grand Lodge. The Grand Master is well aware of what's going on in Fife and Kinross and he is very keen that we don't just get to October and stop. As we are in Fife and Kinross, so the legacy would be, and leading up to that legacy would be to get the provincial grand masters all to come together and I would give a presentation at that meeting. At the same time we were going to have a presentation to the almoners at Edinburgh, the grand lodge...Gerry and Ruth would give a presentation as they do at the moment. So we've certainly got a plan, it doesn't stop in October. Because Dementia doesn't stop in October."

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