



Dementia in Scotland

mentalwelfare
commission for scotland



Inside – How the Mental Welfare Commission protects the rights and wellbeing of people with dementia



Personalised support for people with dementia



Dementia Awareness Week 2013



Profile: Brian Malone tells how he got his curiosity back

Chief Executive's comment



We will mark the start of this year's Dementia Awareness Week with the launch of Scotland's second National Dementia Strategy, a new plan that will cover the next three years. At a policy level it is quite remarkable what has been achieved by the current strategy: the new post-diagnostic support guarantee, the development of the Promoting Excellence framework for knowledge and skills, graduation of over 300 Dementia Champions and the embedding of the Alzheimer Scotland Nurse Consultants within NHS Boards. There has been significant development of new training materials and courses and all of this underpinned by the new National Dementia Standards. Great progress indeed and there is much that we can be very proud of in Scotland.

However, policy on its own cannot and will not change lives. It only marks the start of a change process that needs people, passion and commitment to deliver. Many good policies have not achieved their aims and I am sure you will agree that we still have a long way to go before our 5,000 members can be truly satisfied that the quality and consistency of support offered to every person with dementia and their families, carers and partners is of the highest possible standard throughout Scotland.

Our members, including the voice of people with dementia in the Scottish Dementia Working Group, and the voice of carers in the

National Dementia Carers Action Network, play a crucial role in ensuring that policy truly changes practice and changes lives. The powerful force for change that our members embody has taken us to this point after many years of hard work and effort; we have turned the tide and we owe you – our members, campaigners, fundraisers and supporters – a great debt and huge thanks for all that you have done and continue to do to support our work.

We also need new members to take up the baton and keep this momentum going. We must continue to lead this change and ensure that people with dementia, their partners, families and carers enjoy their lives as equal and valued citizens, free from discrimination, stigma and the horrific negative judgements about dementia that still permeate our society.

From Dementia Awareness Week, through to the end of September, we will be doing as much as we can to increase our membership. Anything you can do to help will be much appreciated. Imagine if each one of our current members encouraged just one other person to join our movement – what a huge difference that would make.

Henry Simmons
Chief Executive, Alzheimer Scotland

Dementia Awareness Week 2013



The theme for this year's Dementia Awareness Week is "Community Connections" and our staff, volunteers, members and supporters are truly connecting with communities all over Scotland. People are getting together for sponsored walks (with and without dogs), bike rides, garden parties, cream teas, coffee mornings and tea dances, charity concerts and sing-along sessions, and much, much more.

There are also celebrations taking place – the 25th anniversaries of our Perth and Lewis & Harris Branches, for example, as well as the launch of our 50th Football Memories Group.

Our Dementia Nurses and Dementia Champions are getting involved too – from the numbers of leaflets we have been sending out, anyone visiting a general hospital in Scotland should be well aware of our Dementia Awareness Week.

The next edition of Dementia in Scotland will provide highlights of the week, including the launch of

the second Dementia Strategy, as well as pictures from just some of the many events across the country.

Stitching the Pitch at Hampden Park – quilt challenge grand finale

Saturday 8 June will see the culmination of our Hampden Quilt Challenge when (fingers crossed) over 4,000 patchwork quilts will cover the pitch at Scotland's national football stadium. Quilter-in-residence Ann Hill and our Community Fundraiser Rachel Laming have planned a military-style operation using dozens of volunteers to make sure the quilt laying goes off without a hitch (or should that be a stitch?). It will truly be a remarkable sight.

Stitching the Pitch will be the ultimate achievement of Ann's 'Yes we can – together' project; a partnership between Ann, Alzheimer Scotland, NHS Dumfries & Galloway, and the Scottish

Football Museum. The project has involved Ann working with people with dementia, their carers, partners and families to create quilts that convey emotive and poignant experiences from their lives. These memory quilts provided Ann with the inspiration to plan an event that not only raised awareness about dementia, but also much-needed funds to support people affected by the illness in Scotland. Two years and thousands of quilts later, Ann has already taken her quilts to the Scottish Parliament twice: firstly to raise awareness of the Hampden Quilt Challenge with an exhibition at Holyrood and then to celebrate the efforts of quilting groups across Scotland at an evening reception hosted by Alex Fergusson MSP.

The quilts donated to this amazing event will be sold at Hampden on the day, at various quilt shows over the next few months and through popular crafts website, Folksy. If you are interested in buying a very special piece of quilting history, you can find out more on our website later in the summer.



Ann Hill (centre front) with MSPs at a reception, Scottish Parliament on 7 May

Can you help with our Membership Challenge?



If you are already a member of Alzheimer Scotland, you will receive with this edition of *Dementia in Scotland* a specially designed leaflet offering FREE Individual membership to new members, for a limited period only. This offer applies from the start of Dementia Awareness Week (3 June) until 30th September 2013.

As our Chief Executive, Henry Simmons, says in his Comment

on the previous page, we need to grow our nationwide community of members who help us influence the changes in policy and practice which make a difference to the lives of people living with dementia in Scotland, now and in the future. If you have a friend, colleague or neighbour who is interested in or affected by dementia, please pass on this leaflet and ask them to add their voice to our cause.

200 new **Dementia Champions** graduate



On Thursday 2 May, the second and third cohorts of Dementia Champions graduated at Edinburgh's Murrayfield Stadium. Alex Neil, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing, congratulated them on their achievement. They join the first cohort who graduated last year, creating a total of 310 champions who are working to deliver improvements in dementia care across health and social services in Scotland.

The role of the Dementia Champions is to share knowledge and promote positive attitudes and values when working with people with dementia. They also help implement good practice as outlined in Scotland's National Dementia Strategies and the Promoting Excellence training framework.

Last year's graduates are already contributing to changes in how their workplaces respond to people with dementia. They help make sure that places where care is



delivered are dementia friendly, and that family members and unpaid carers are fully involving as partners in care. They are improving screening systems in hospitals to help identify people who have dementia, a cognitive impairment or delirium.

The Dementia Champions programme was commissioned by NHS Education for Scotland and the Scottish Social Services Council

with funding from the Scottish Government. It is being delivered by the University of the West of Scotland and Alzheimer Scotland.

To find out more about the role of the Dementia Champions and their impact, you can watch film clips from the graduation ceremony online by visiting www.youtube.com and searching for 'Dementia Champions'.

Protecting the rights and wellbeing of people with dementia

Dr Donald Lyons is Chief Executive of the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland and a former member of Alzheimer Scotland's governing Council. He describes the Commission's work and its role in protecting the rights of people with dementia.



What is your background and what led to your appointment to the Mental Welfare Commission?

I worked as an old age psychiatrist in south Glasgow for many years, and was part of a team that introduced new services for people with dementia in the early 1990s. These included community-based services like roving clinics that visited care homes. Although these are widespread now, at the time they were quite innovative. They gave us opportunities to diagnose people with dementia earlier and also provide support to their carers.

In 1994 the Royal College of Psychiatrists put me forward as their representative for Alzheimer Scotland's governing Council. Shortly after this, the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 was being developed, and I worked closely with Alzheimer Scotland on their input into the legislation. This helped develop my interest in the legal and ethical challenges of caring for people with mental health problems. I was appointed Chief Executive of the Commission in 2003.

What is the Commission's main role?

Our role is to make sure that people with mental illness or a learning disability receive care and treatment that is delivered lawfully and ethically. We tackle this from two directions: by empowering people who use services, and by influencing policy-makers. Ensuring that people who access services have realistically high expectations about treatment and their rights is very important. We also guide and influence policy-makers to ensure their decisions promote the wellbeing and recovery of people with mental illness.

Scotland has had a safeguarding organisation of one sort or another since 1857. The Mental Welfare Commission was established in 1960 and has gone from strength to strength since then. Its powers were reinforced by the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 and the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003.

How does your work impact on people with dementia?

We spend a lot of our time visiting people, including people with dementia. We carry out two main types of visit. Themed visits involve going to see people who are receiving care and treatment in a certain type of establishment across Scotland. These allow us to compare practice across a wide area. Focused visits are based on individual risk assessments, often where our antennae have gone up following a previous visit or concerns expressed by patients or carers. These enable us to focus

closely on the care of individuals in one particular facility. We also investigate individual cases in depth. We can only do a few of these but they can have a huge impact and lead to better care across Scotland when services learn the lessons from our reports. During our visits we find out what the person has to say about their care and treatment. We want to make sure that it is in line with mental health, incapacity or any other relevant legislation and we will report on any breaches, discrimination or equality issues that we discover.

Among the things we are looking for is whether the person's capacity to make decisions is being properly assessed. This can be particularly relevant for people with dementia. If they don't have capacity, we want to know who is making decisions on their behalf and be sure that they are made lawfully. Most importantly, we want to ensure that all decisions provide maximum benefit to the person and restrict their freedom as little as possible. They must always take account of the views of people with dementia (and their carers) and promote their independence and wellbeing as much as possible.

We are currently conducting a major themed visit to people with dementia in long-stay mental health care. Although the majority of people with dementia are being looked after in care homes, a significant minority with the most challenging needs still receive care in long-stay units. Many have significantly stressed or distressed behaviour. During these visits we are also paying particular attention to meeting carers and finding out how well they are supported.

Around a quarter of our visits are unannounced, and we do that because you can smell the fresh paint if someone knows you're coming. The reason we don't do more unannounced visits is because people may need time to think about what to say

to us or involve independent advocates. We often want to meet with carers too.

How do you ensure that people with dementia receive the right care?

There are certain aspects of care that we look for again and again, and which run through quite a lot of our reports. One of these is finding out whether people are getting access to outside space and fresh air. Getting out is an important activity. We also look for evidence of purposeful, meaningful, person-centred care. For instance, life stories and life story work are vital. You cannot provide good care for someone with advanced dementia until and unless you understand what their life had been like previously.

What has been your most important piece of work relating to people with dementia?

One of our most important reports was prepared in partnership with the then Care Commission in 2009 and looked at the experiences of people with dementia in care homes. Although the title is *Remember, I'm still me* it was very nearly called 'Likes cats and milk'. In one care home we visited, those were the only two things staff knew about one of their residents. It's clear that you can't provide proper person-centred care with so little information about someone. *Remember, I'm still me* was important. The media covered our work in detail, including quoting individual case examples. The report revealed that in most care homes no life story work was taking place at all. The irony was that services had forgotten who the person with dementia was, and that was why we chose *Remember, I'm still me* as the title.

Decisions for dignity was published in 2011 and looked at the care of people with dementia in acute hospitals. We were concerned that this type of care was being

unduly criticised and didn't think it was as bad as it was being painted. A lot of the care we observed was very good, and a lot of the attitudes were very good. This was a difficult message for some people to hear because horror stories about people with dementia in general hospitals tend to get much more coverage. We found there was good attention to nutrition, and much less in the way of inappropriate use of medication than we expected.

What we do find in general hospitals is that you get occasional pockets of bad attitude where people with dementia are treated as non-persons. It's almost as if they don't exist and they don't matter. The best example of this was described in *Starved of care* (2011). When Nicola Sturgeon announced the Government's programme of inspections of older people's services she quoted *Starved of care*, saying this had made her realise that better inspection regimes were needed. We were criticised in some quarters for choosing an emotive title, but if we don't get emotive about appalling examples of practice like this there's no point in us being here. In most cases people get good, ethical care and treatment, but the person described in the report really didn't have a voice. When that happens we need to be there to champion the care of the individual.

How else do you improve care for people with mental health conditions?

Probably the single most important part of our work is giving advice. Anyone can phone our Freephone number (0800 389 6809) and this service is massively used. We get well over 3,000 calls a year, and goodness knows how many letters and emails asking for help and advice. Anyone who phones up with a concern about whether someone is being treated lawfully and ethically, or whether there is a deficiency in their care, will get a call back from an experienced mental health

practitioner. They will talk through the issues and provide advice and support. It's important to stress that we don't handle complaints, which need to be channelled through whichever organisation the problem relates to. However, based on what is flagged up to us we may undertake further action ourselves. It depends on the seriousness of the issue and whether we think we are best placed to do it.

We would much rather people didn't have to make complaints and a good example of how we do that is by encouraging staff to use our advice line. They can make sure they are acting appropriately and can also access information in our good practice guides. The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 introduced promoting good practice as one of the Commission's functions. We were already doing that, but we responded by publishing additional best practice guides.

Our original best practice guide predated the new Act and is still our most important. It's called *Rights, risks and limits to freedom* and it is quoted in codes of practice for mental health and incapacity legislation. We now have about 30 guides on a wide variety of subjects, covering everything from carers and confidentiality to covert medication. Another guide, *Consenting adults?*, discusses the rights and risks relating to sexual relationships involving people with a mental disorder.

The process we use for developing guidance documents is interesting. For instance, when we started looking at covert medication, we contacted everyone we could think of with an interest in this area, including an anti-covert medication campaigner. Covert medication is the administration of any medical treatment in disguised form, for example hiding medication in a person's food or drink so they are unaware they are taking it. This is only considered to be appropriate in very occasional circumstances.

We invited our group of experts to a meeting and set out the broad legal framework, then gave them anonymised cases we had encountered. We asked them to say whether they would consider covert medication or not in each scenario. The principles were based on the consensus that emerged from their answers. As a result of this process, the guidance we produce is very heavily based on real experiences and very heavily derived from the input of stakeholders.

How do you influence the professional community to promote systemic changes in practice?

All our reports end up on the desks of adult protection committees, and we know that they use them to see where things have gone wrong elsewhere so they can avoid making the same mistakes. I have spent quite some time talking to these committees, usually having a bit of a rant about some of the things that incense us. It's the cultural and attitudinal things that anger us most. Anyone can make a mistake; the important thing is learning from them. We get most angry when there is a lack of a respectful and caring attitude for individuals and carers. That's when we are likely to make the strongest recommendations and try and change the culture.

The other thing that's really important is how we use the information we gather at a higher level. We regularly meet senior officials from all NHS boards and local authorities, as well as Government ministers who are responsible for health and social care. It's the principle of acting locally while thinking global. Through a chain of events, one letter or call to the Commission can lead to a change in national policy because of the way we use that information. *Starved of care* is a case in point. It began with a letter of concern from a psychiatrist.

How successful has the Commission been in achieving its goals to date?

There is a lot of work to do to ensure that people receive care that is ethical and appropriate. However, at the time of *Remember I'm still me* only about 25% of people were receiving lawful medical treatment. Now it's over half, so we have made significant progress. This is just one of the areas where care for people with mental illness is improving.

How would you sum up the role of the Commission?

We are often called a watchdog. This is true, but we are at least as much of a guide dog as a watchdog. I believe this is a much better way of working. We put a lot of effort into providing advice and guidance on good practice, combined with the old-fashioned idea of 'walking the shop floor', so that we can make it less likely that things will go wrong in the first place, instead of trying to fix them retrospectively.

Janice is a winner for Alzheimer Scotland



Janice McAlister (left) photographed with former Alzheimer Scotland Dementia Nurse Julie Crabtree, who delivered a session on patient-centred care as part of the training.

Janice McAlister, Alzheimer Scotland Dementia Nurse Consultant in Kilmarnock, is celebrating winning the *British Journal of Nursing's* 2013 Elderly Care Award. Janice developed a training programme for acute care staff enabling them to meet the needs of people with dementia more effectively.

At the time Janice was working for NHS Ayrshire & Arran's Elderly Mental Health Service. She created a training programme for

acute care staff based around the recommendations of *Promoting Excellence*. Published by the Scottish Government in 2011, *Promoting Excellence* sets out the skills that health and social service staff need to work effectively with people with dementia, their families and carers.

The programme initially ran from January to April 2012, with 810 staff completing training tailored to their needs and the clinical area they worked in. However, demand was so great that it was extended until December 2012. To date, 1,400 staff from acute care have completed the training.

"The sessions covered a range of topics, including techniques like cognitive stimulation therapy and multi-sensory therapy which can be used as an alternative to prescribing drugs. We used case studies to help staff understand the central role of patients and carers in

making decisions about their care. The theme throughout the training was providing person-centred care.

"Feedback from patients, families and staff has been very positive. Winning the award was a great honour and a real tribute to everyone who has completed the training and is making such a big difference to the care of people with dementia in hospital."

Questionnaires completed by staff before and after the training show the positive impact it has had. There was a big increase in how they rated their skills, knowledge and confidence to care for patients with dementia.

This study day was one of the most informative, enjoyable days I have ever attended in my 12 years nursing. Thank you very much. It has actually made me rethink my whole career.

Lanarkshire Dementia Resource Centre opens



Photo courtesy of Paul J Davies Photography

On Friday 5 April Alzheimer Scotland's brand new Lanarkshire Dementia Resource Centre was officially opened by Provost James Robertson of North Lanarkshire Council. The centre is located at 64 Dalziel Street in Motherwell in

the former Dalziel Co-operative Society building.

Volunteers, staff, and donors were joined by carers and fundraisers for the grand opening. William Barr, who is a carer and who raised

funds for the centre, explained its importance to local people:

"Loneliness is the greatest emotion of carers. Having somewhere to go for comfort and understanding cannot be measured by words. The knowledge and dedication of the staff can enable a carer to fulfil their own life while dedicating themselves to the care and wellbeing of their loved one."

The new resource centre will provide additional support for local people with dementia and their carers. They can drop in and talk to staff about anything from memory worries to obtaining a diagnosis or accessing services. The centre also provides access to a wide range of local and national resources, as well as running education and support sessions for people with dementia and their carers.

Gold award for Dementia Demonstrator Site



Left to right: Simon Haston (Improvement Service) presenting the award, Joe McElholm, North Lanarkshire Council, Sandra Shafii, AHP Consultant in Dementia, Arlene Crockett, Alzheimer Scotland and Paul Callaghan, North Lanarkshire Council, with Jackie Bird

On 7 March the North Lanarkshire Dementia Demonstrator Site was honoured with a top prize at the COSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities) Excellence Awards. The awards celebrate the most innovative local government initiatives in Scotland, placing special emphasis on projects that change lives. The North Lanarkshire Dementia Demonstrator Site won the gold award in the 'One to Watch' category.

North Lanarkshire was one of three demonstrator sites that received funding from the Scottish Government following the publication of the first National Dementia Strategy in 2010. Each of the sites has explored ways to deliver better services for people with dementia. The North Lanarkshire Dementia Demonstrator Site looked at every aspect of the dementia pathway to find ways of improving integration between different sectors and services. It has spearheaded many innovative projects, including:

- establishing Motherwell as Scotland's first dementia friendly town
- encouraging people with dementia and their carers to take advantage of free equipment and adaptations to help them continue living at home safely
- developing local GP websites to include more information on dementia and the support available

- promoting three local dementia cafés
- making changes within local hospitals to improve the environment for people with dementia and ensure they receive the most appropriate care
- piloting a post-diagnosis support project in Wishaw
- supporting people with dementia in the community to reduce unnecessary hospital admissions
- developing an integrated pathway for end of life care for people with dementia.

Praising the North Lanarkshire project, the COSLA judging panel said: "Led by a genuinely multi agency team, it works closely with a wide range of partners through the North Lanarkshire Health and Care Partnership and the Older People's Partnership Board. Amongst its innovative work, it has recognised that people with dementia can often become socially isolated, and has worked to support people within their community, boosting not only their health, but their social inclusion. That proactive approach is making a real difference to the lives of people affected by dementia and led to Motherwell becoming Scotland's first dementia friendly town."

We would like to congratulate everyone involved with the North Lanarkshire Dementia Demonstrator Site on winning this prestigious award.

Book now for the Dementia Scotland conference on 21 October 2013



Public Service Events and Alzheimer Scotland are pleased to present 'Dementia Scotland: a national priority', a high-profile conference taking place at Surgeons' Hall, Edinburgh on 21 October 2013.

The conference will explore opportunities to implement recommendations from Scotland's second National Dementia Strategy. It will feature outstanding speakers who will discuss how best to respond to the dementia challenge. They will cover topics such as improving diagnosis rates, innovations in care and support, and raising standards. Presentations from health and social care leaders will be put into context by talks from people living with dementia and their carers.

Dementia Scotland supports Alzheimer Scotland's goal of raising awareness and understanding of dementia among the public, so that people with dementia and their carers are encouraged to seek help and are supported by their community.

For further details and booking information, please contact Daniel Dickson on 0161 831 7111 or ddickson@publicservice.co.uk.

Personalised support for people with dementia in Ayrshire

In recent years there has been a change in the way services for people with dementia are delivered. Many people are starting to realise they can take more control over the support they receive, and tailor it to their needs and interests. Self-directed support has helped empower people with dementia and their carers to access the support and assistance they want. It enables them to arrange support that suits them, often using a personal budget which they can choose how they want to spend. Other people with dementia are choosing to use their own resources to purchase personalised support.



John's father Gary photographed during a day out to Whitelee Wind Farm with his personal assistant.

Alzheimer Scotland's Ayrshire Personalised Support Service was launched in August 2011 in response to requests for more individualised support from people with dementia and their families. Developing the service has been a learning curve, both for Alzheimer Scotland and the families who use it. This is because providing personalised support that is flexible and responsive can be a challenge. However, the benefits for people with dementia and their carers have been significant.

Earlier in the year the Ayrshire Personalised Support Service was named as a finalist at the Laing & Buisson Independent Specialist Care Awards. It has also been shortlisted for the Care Accolades 2013. John, whose father has a support package provided by the service, describes his experiences of personalised support:

"Before being introduced to Alzheimer Scotland, my family and I had tried most of the services available locally to support my father. None of them seemed to fit the bill or be able to understand our needs.

"Our lives became infinitely easier when we were introduced to Alzheimer Scotland. It was instantly apparent that their staff had an in-depth understanding of my father's needs and how to communicate with him. They were able to understand his feelings and needs very quickly, and built a very strong bond with him, ensuring he always felt comfortable around them.

"The service is very flexible and is always able to meet our needs. When dad is with one of the carers we are always completely confident that he is in good hands and we are able to relax. The

support we have received from Alzheimer Scotland has been second to none and I have no doubt this is one of the very best services available to support people who have dementia and also their carers. I cannot thank everyone at Alzheimer Scotland enough for what they have done and continue to do for us. It is a breath of fresh air that finally there is a service which is able to provide care and understanding for people with this very complex illness."

The service works with each person and their family to design a personalised support plan that offers them support in a way and at a time that suits their needs. It always tries to have a 'can do' ethos, and looks at innovative ways of ensuring that the people who are using the service are in control of how it is delivered.

Our committed, highly trained and well-supported staff team understands dementia and the challenges it brings. They provide assistance and support

to help people maintain their independence and keep doing the things that they enjoy. With our help many people with dementia can stay in touch with their friends and remain part of the community. The service also helps people with dementia to maintain a sense of

purpose, belonging and meaning in their lives.

For more information on the Ayrshire Personalised Support Service, please phone 01563 542621 or email ayrshiresps@alzscot.org.

Benefits of the Ayrshire Personalised Support Service

- people are maintaining their friendships and relationships, as well as making new connections
- they have the support to do the things they want to do
- support packages are built around the individual's life and circumstances
- people are supported to maintain their skills; where possible, staff always do things **with** the person, not **for** them
- people feel valued, listened to and safe
- they are able to live their lives how they choose, and are supported to remain in their own homes when this is their choice
- people are able to make choices about what support is right for them through the provision of information on subjects including welfare benefits, self-directed support and what is on in their local community.

Argos and Homebase fundraising boost for Alzheimer Scotland

We are thrilled to announce that Argos and Homebase colleagues have voted to support Alzheimer Scotland and our sister charities as their Charity of the Year. Over the last two years, Home Retail Group raised £4.6 million for Teenage Cancer Trust and we are confident we can reach the same target in our partnership, which runs from March this year to February 2015.

It's so important for people with dementia to be able to stay in their own homes, which is why



our partnership will focus on this goal. Home Retail Group colleagues from across the UK will be getting involved in a huge range of exciting fundraising activities on the theme of 'No place like home'. Events already planned include talent shows and 80s themed weeks. To kick things off, many

Homebase and Argos stores across the UK took part in a Wizard of Oz themed 'There's no place like home' event by dressing up as their favourite characters. The funds raised will help support people with dementia to stay in their own home and be part of community life for as long as possible.

Profile: **Brian Malone**



Brian Malone (63) was born and brought up in Dundee where he still lives with his wife and partner of 33 years, Sharon (58). They have a daughter and a grandson who loves playing with his Grandad. Brian saw the world during his time in the Royal Navy before returning to Dundee where he worked for some years training social care staff in health and safety and manual handling – a job he loved.

A few years ago, the family went through a bad patch with several close family bereavements. Sharon was ill for a time and Brian was contending with depression and a condition called gastroparesis which affects his ability to digest food and causes him to be very unwell at times. Sharon noticed that Brian was starting to have some problems – difficulty finding words, using inappropriate words and not finishing sentences. She even spoke to someone from Alzheimer Scotland at an information stand in a local shopping centre about her concerns and then to Brian's Community Psychiatric Nurse. But it probably took around three years before the process of assessment actually started.

Brian was finally diagnosed three years ago with dementia with Lewy bodies and vascular dementia, following a year-long process

of scans and tests. He had also experienced several small strokes. Brian has many of the classic symptoms of Dementia with Lewy Bodies – he has very vivid dreams and hallucinations, he has a poor sleep pattern which can cause him to be awake during the night (of which more later) or can cause him to sleep deeply for 12 to 14 hours at a time; he also experiences falls.

The first year after diagnosis was a very dark place with Brian not believing or understanding what he'd been told was wrong with him. He found himself attending a local psychiatric day care service where he felt like a fish out of water – everyone else was so much older than him.

Two years ago, he was referred to Alzheimer Scotland. Wendy Rankin, Outreach Worker at our Dundee Dementia Resource Centre, came out to see Brian and saw he needed support. She persuaded him to come along to the Centre – he didn't want to at first but she promised that if he wasn't happy she'd take him straight home again.

"I walked in and there were 11 or 12 men all laughing and joking. I asked where the people with dementia were and that was them. I felt like I was back living again" said Brian.

This group was our Men's Early Stage Group who meet twice a week at our Resource Centre on Morgan Street. The group gets involved in lots of different activities, of their own choosing – bowling, playing pool and so on. The important thing is it's what the group wants to do, not what someone else tells them they'll be doing that day. Once a fortnight, the men have a social outing to Fairmuir Social Club where they can have a pint and join in with sing-songs, play pool, darts and dominoes.

It's not just Brian who gets involved with the Centre's activities. Sharon also goes along to events such as the summer and Christmas dances as well as joining the Carers' Walking Group, which she says is great.

Safe in the community

Brian's condition causes him to sleep badly and in the past he sometimes went out in the middle of the night in his pyjamas and dressing gown. On more than one occasion he was picked up by the police and returned home, with Sharon sleeping through the whole episode and not knowing anything until the morning. They now have a community alarm system and smoke and exit alarm fitted so Sharon is alerted if Brian does try to go out during the night. Even if he does, they both feel that there are people in the community who will look out for him. The couple have been very open with family, neighbours, the police and local shopkeepers and Brian carries his Alzheimer Scotland Helpcard with him so he has that to hand if he needs help.

"I like to go for the papers every day – if I forget what papers I want, the local shopkeeper shows me the ones he knows I usually get", says Brian. He also collects his own prescriptions from the local pharmacy – "I could get them delivered but I like to get out and have a routine". Brian and Sharon also have a helpful bank manager who helped set

up online banking for Brian so he could monitor his bank account even though Sharon manages their finances now.

Using IT

Brian has embraced new technology in a big way, largely thanks to his involvement with COBALT (Challenging Obstacles and Barriers to Assistive Living Technologies) which is a two-year project funded by the Technology Strategy Board to look at the obstacles to people using Assistive Living Technologies. A growing amount of technology is being developed to support older people but take-up is low. This collaborative project aims to understand why and find out how to change this.

Brian credits his growing use of new technology to University of St Andrews Research Fellow Maggie Ellis who is part of the COBALT team. Maggie was put in touch with Brian to help with her research – she wanted to show that people with dementia can relearn previously held skills and, in certain circumstances, learn new skills.

At this time, Brian was self-conscious about not being able to do things any more – household tasks which used to be routine were now a problem and he'd been banned from the kitchen. Maggie encouraged him to try something new. He spotted her iPhone and saw what it could be used for, so decided to buy one. "It stayed in its box for two weeks. I kept taking it out then putting it back again" but Maggie started showing him how he could use it and now he can't do without it. It enables Brian to keep in constant touch with Sharon, which is reassuring for her; he uses it to alert him to take his medication; and stores files and information about travel arrangements. Maggie also encouraged Brian to keep a daily electronic journal on his phone where he records all sorts of things – his health, the weather, what he's eaten, where he has been.

Brian also took a shine to Maggie's laptop. Through the COBALT project he now has one of his own to work with and he and Sharon are learning to use it together. Once an avid reader with often six books on the go, Brian had given up reading as he was unable to remember what he had read and had to keep starting over. He now has a Kindle, a Christmas present from Sharon, which has reintroduced him to reading. Yes, he still has to go back sometimes to remind himself of what he has read but he can control the amount of information on the screen and can easily mark where he has got to.

He is also being allowed back into the kitchen where he can now use the microwave, and can cope with the TV remote control and the door exit system, previously things which caused frustration.

Brian's confidence was boosted further by being asked by Maggie Ellis to speak at a conference in Bath in January this year about his experiences with the COBALT project. "I talked about the changes in my life as a result of re-learning old skills and the fact I am proof positive that new skills can be learned, especially with new technology". Both Brian and Sharon stressed the importance of repetition in helping things "stick" when learning new skills or working with new technology.

Through the COBALT website, Brian writes a blog about his experiences which can be accessed online at <http://cobaltproject.org/>

Taking on new challenges

As well as developing new skills in managing technology, Brian is now involved in a wide range of new challenges, including more public speaking. I first heard Brian speak at our AGM last November where he spoke eloquently, and without notes, about his involvement with the Dancing with Dementia project in Tayside. Brian would describe himself as a reluctant dancer and had to be persuaded to give the

project a try. He was very hesitant at first and worried about falling but the instructors helped him gain confidence and got him to understand the steps and the music. That has stayed with him and he is now first on the dance floor at any social event.

Another public speaking event saw Brian help two of our staff bid for funding for a new singing project – a choir for people with dementia and their carers. This was so successful that they were awarded more money than they originally asked for!

Scottish Dementia Working Group

Brian is now a committee member of the SDWG, another development which he says has turned his life around. This involves lots of meetings, usually in Glasgow. At first, Sharon wanted to drive Brian to the meetings herself but now he travels independently, using his trusted technology, but also Scotrail's Assisted Travel system which he has found excellent. On one occasion the guard escorted him to his booked seat on a very busy train, to find it occupied by someone else. The seat had been double booked. So Brian ended up in a first class seat at no extra charge and greatly enjoyed getting the hot drinks and biscuits brought to his seat!

The future

So what does the future hold for Brian? "Before, I used to be frightened about the future. Now I treat every day as it comes". He has accepted that his illness will progress but credits his new outlook to Alzheimer Scotland staff and the members of the Scottish Dementia Working Group as well as his "rock" Sharon and their family. Sharon agrees that there are now many more positive things in Brian's life.

"I now have my curiosity back"

Maureen Thom
Information Manager, Alzheimer Scotland

Scotland's Dementia Awards 2013



Scotland's Dementia Awards celebrate innovation, creativity and best practice in all aspects of care and support for people with dementia. Finalists for the 2013 awards will be announced

in August, with the 2013 award ceremony taking place at Hampden Park on Thursday 19 September.

The awards are a partnership between Alzheimer Scotland, NHS

Education for Scotland, NHS Health Scotland and the Scottish Social Services Council. Now in their second year, they celebrate World Alzheimer's Day, which takes place on 21 September.

The six award categories have once again attracted a wide range of entries reflecting the best examples of care for people with dementia across Scotland. During the ceremony in September, a lifetime achievement award will also be presented.

We would be delighted if you could join us at the award ceremony. For more details, please visit www.scotlandsdementiaawards.org.uk.

In 2012 the 'Most innovative partnership' award went to Argyll & Bute Dementia Teams, which includes staff from NHS Highland, Argyll & Bute Council and Alzheimer Scotland.

Fife Dementia Strategy event

On 19 March, NHS Fife held an event at Queen Margaret Hospital in Dunfermline to demonstrate how Scotland's National Dementia Strategy is being implemented in Fife. The event was held in partnership with Alzheimer Scotland and the Scottish Government and brought together delegates from health, social services and the independent and voluntary sectors. People with dementia and their carers also came along to contribute their views and hear about the work being done.

The event showcased the work that is taking place in Fife to improve services for people with dementia. Graham Monteith (Head of Mental Health Quality Improvement)

spoke about aspects of the Strategy that relate to diagnosis and post-diagnostic support. Louise Bell (Service Manager Older People's Services Fife Social Services) talked about the work being done by health and social services as they joined forces to develop a local dementia strategy. Caroline Inwood (Director of Nursing Operational Division) described how the care of people with dementia in acute hospitals was being improved, while Emma Reynish (Consultant Geriatrician) talked about the comprehensive geriatric assessment process.

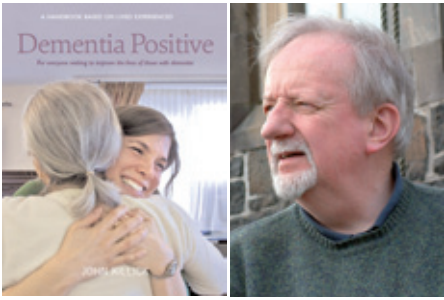
Helen Skinner (Alzheimer Scotland Professional Development Nurse) spoke about the Dementia Champions programme, and

local champions described the projects they had undertaken as part of the programme. Hugh Masters (Scottish Government) described future work to improve standards of care for people with dementia in Scotland, while Henry Simmons (Chief Executive of Alzheimer Scotland) talked about how Scotland's second National Dementia Strategy, due to be launched in June, would build on the work of the first Strategy.

The event demonstrated the commitment across all organisations in Fife to improve services to meet the needs of people with dementia, their family and carers.

For further information about dementia care in NHS Fife, please contact Helen Skinner on 01383 674036, or by email at helen.skinner@nhs.net.

Meet John Killick, Alzheimer Scotland's writer in residence



John Killick is Alzheimer Scotland's writer in residence. Here he describes what his role involves, along with some of the broader work he is doing in the field of dementia.

"You may well be asking what a writer in residence is. Well, he (or she!) is a kind of jack-of-all-trades whose work involves some journalism, some book-writing, public speaking, radio broadcasts and workshopping. As I say, a bit of a mixture.

"I taught English and drama for 30 years before becoming a writer in residence for a private healthcare company. In 1992 they suggested I tried my hand at working with people with dementia. I soon realised I had stumbled into the greatest challenge of my life. I had to find new ways of communicating and new ways of recording the language I was listening to. It

was difficult at the beginning but I gradually made progress, then suddenly realised that a second career had opened up for me. One member of staff called me 'A linguist of lost words'!

"This new role has taken me all over the world, to countries including America, Canada, Australia and Japan, as well as countless European destinations. Along the way I have written a number of books (ten at the last count!). Probably the most important of these has been *Communication and the care of people with dementia*, which I co-wrote with the Edinburgh psychologist Kate Allan. It was published by Open University Press in 2001.

"Since becoming a writer in residence I have mainly been freelance, although for six years I was Research Fellow in communication through the arts at the Dementia Services Development Centre (University of Stirling). I currently run workshops on a range of themes which are suitable for a variety of audiences. I don't receive a salary from Alzheimer Scotland but I'm available to run any of the following workshops for a modest fee:

- poetry writing
- improvised drama
- creativity
- playfulness
- restoring the balance (with Caroline Brown, for family carers)
- reflective practice (for care staff)
- general communication.

"Forthcoming highlights for me include giving a presentation and workshop at the Ageing and spirituality conference in Edinburgh (7–10 July), and launching my new book at this year's Edinburgh International Book Festival. The book is called *Dementia positive: a person-centred handbook for everyone wishing to improve the lives of those with dementia*. It is targeted at family carers and other supporters of people with dementia, and concentrates on communication and relationships. I seem to have been writing and rewriting it for years, but I finally had to relinquish the text at the end of April. It is published by Luath Press in Edinburgh, and it would be great if as many of you as possible could join me on 13 August at 2.30pm in Charlotte Square.

"Finally, I have a website (shared with the aforementioned Kate Allan) with more details about the range of work I do. The address is www.dementiapositive.co.uk and it likes to be visited. If at any time you would like to get in touch with any thoughts or proposals, my email address is johnkillick@dementiapositive.co.uk.

Standard Life make £118,000 donation

We would like to say a huge thank you to the staff of Standard Life who donated an incredible £118,102.98 to Alzheimer Scotland raised by fundraising events and matched giving. The donation will be used to help fund our Edinburgh Dementia Advisor post, as well as new information resources to increase understanding and awareness of dementia. Standard Life will be supporting Alzheimer Scotland again in 2013, along with nine other chosen charities.



Graeme Mcewan, Director of Group Communications and Brand, presents the cheque for £118,102.98 to Catherine Thomas, Trusts and Corporate Fundraising Manager.

Fundraising News



Do your own fundraising. It does exactly what it says on the tin!

Many of our supporters are now organising their own fundraising events and their hard work is making a huge contribution to Alzheimer Scotland's work. If you're thinking about raising funds for us, why not contact our 'Do your own fundraising' team? They can provide advice and support to make sure your event goes with a bang.

We know that coming up with ideas and practical support for a fundraising event can be a challenge. Our team is only a phone call or email away and can help you with ideas and resources to help you smash your target.

Fundraising can take many shapes and forms. Our supporters have raised money by knitting scarves, organising craft fairs and doing sponsored head shaves. One even got a tattoo in memory of her Gran! The 'Do your own fundraising' team love talking to fundraisers, so why not give them a call on 0131 243 1480 or email community@alzscot.org.



Conquer the Great Wall of China: 13-22 May 2014

Could you go the extra mile for Alzheimer Scotland and raise funds by trekking along the Great Wall of China? Sandra Shields, Dementia Nurse Consultant and Alzheimer Scotland supporter, has signed up to trek along the Great Wall next May. She has also persuaded another Dementia

Nurse Consultant, Anne Hutchison, to come with her. But Sandra is hoping many more people will join her and Anne to raise vital funds for Alzheimer Scotland.

The trek will be a real challenge, with an average of 5-6 hours of hiking per day, but almost anyone can take part with the right training. And the Great Wall of China is one of the world's most awe-inspiring structures, so the fantastic scenery and surroundings will keep your mind off your tired feet.

To get involved you will need pay a deposit, then raise a minimum of £3,100. This will cover your flights, accommodation and food. Our fundraiser has put together a timeline of events and activities that will help you reach and even exceed this target. For more details about the trek, please give Rachel Laming, Community Fundraiser, a call on 0141 946 0966.



Ladies Lunch raises £6,491

Alzheimer Scotland's first Ladies Lunch was a rip-roaring success and raised an incredible £6,491! This glamorous event took place on 1 March in the beautiful Grand Central Hotel in Glasgow. The ladies were treated to a glass of fizz, lunch entertainment and a delicious Alzheimer Scotland cupcake. There were lots of fantastic prizes up for grabs in the raffle and auction, with opportunities to bid for an array of tempting items.

We are aiming to make next year's Ladies Lunch even bigger and better, raising more funds for people with dementia in Scotland. If you'd like to come along please email events@alzscot.org and we will keep you posted with the latest details.

Forth Rail Bridge abseil

If you're looking for something exhilarating to do while raising funds for Alzheimer Scotland then look no further, as we have just the event for you! Sign up to abseil from the iconic Forth Rail Bridge on Sunday 15 June.

We have unlimited places available, so this is your chance to take on this unique challenge. Why not team up with a group of friends, colleagues or family members. You'll make the 165 foot descent SAS style (i.e. free-fall!) from the bridge on to the beach below. No previous experience is necessary and it's suitable for everyone over the age of fourteen.

If you're a thrill-seeker, the abseil is guaranteed to be lots of fun, while even those who are a little more cautious have enjoyed the exciting challenge in previous years. It's only £20 to register, so don't miss out on this fantastic event! Sign up today at www.alzscot.org/pages/fundraising/forth-rail-bridge-abseil.htm.

'The Picture House': reminiscence through film



With thanks to Ian who took this picture. Ian is a keen amateur photographer who attends the People's Palace dementia café in Glasgow.

Alzheimer Scotland's East Dunbartonshire services launched its first 'Picture House' event in Milngavie in September 2012. Local Dementia Advisor Kris Rodden explains the background to the film club, and its benefits for people with dementia and their carers.

"In the 1930s Glasgow had more cinemas per head of population than any other city in the world. Family and friends from all walks of life would put on their Sunday best and head out to the 'picture house' to see movies like *Casablanca*, *It's a Wonderful Life* and *Gone with the Wind*.

"Reminiscence therapy can be a great tool for people with dementia. Reminiscence involves the recalling and re-experiencing of life events. Studies have found two main benefits – improved cognitive function and enhanced quality of life. Research has shown that people with dementia are often much less withdrawn after taking part in reminiscence therapy and

have improved cognitive function. This gave me the idea of bringing silver screen films back and screening them for people with dementia and their families.

"One lady at a support group told me she felt uncomfortable about attending new groups. She felt pressurised to participate in group activities and because of this didn't want to go to new events. Another man was looking for somewhere to take his wife for an outing in the afternoon. She went to day care but he wanted to find a dementia-friendly place they could both go to.

"Setting up the Picture House seemed to be the answer and we showed our first film, *The Sound of Music*, at the United Free Church in Milngavie last September. People with dementia and their families and friends came along with boiled sweets and chocolates, all set to watch a great film. We prepared programmes with the original film poster on the front and a short synopsis of the film, as well as news

headlines from the year it was released. During the intermission, we gave out ice creams which went down a storm with the audience.

"After the film finished we asked for feedback on the event. One lady told me 'Every Saturday, my mammy and aunt used to take my sister and I to the Alhambra. We used to take jelly jars to get in for free.*' She had loved going to the cinema and really enjoyed the Picture House event. Another lady was singing *Do-Re-Mi* all the way down the road after the film had finished.

"The Picture House is becoming more and more popular, with local people looking forward to finding out what the next film is going to be. We hold screenings on the first Friday of each month from 2.30 pm until 5 pm and are looking at launching a similar group at Eastwood Park Leisure Centre in June as part of Dementia Awareness Week.

For more information on the Picture House please contact Kris Rodden, Dementia Advisor for East Renfrewshire, on 0141 946 0966 or 07787 445258. Alternatively, you can email krodden@alzscot.org.

*Glasgow cinemas used to let local children see a film for free in exchange for an empty jam jar or ginger bottle. The scheme dated back to the Depression, when youngsters would exchange bottles or jars for a ticket instead of returning them to the shop for their cash deposit.

Self-directed support conference and exhibition, 23 September 2013

New non- emergency police phone number



In February a new non-emergency telephone number for the police was launched in Scotland. Dialling 101 from anywhere in the country will connect you to the service centre covering your local area.

You can contact the police on 101 to talk about a non-emergency crime or incident, such as vandalism, car crime or suspected drug dealing. You can also phone 101 for crime prevention advice or to discuss local policing issues. It is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and costs a flat rate of 15p per call from both landline and mobile phones – no matter how long you are on the phone or what time of day it is. The same number works right across the UK – not just in Scotland.

When you dial 101, the system will automatically determine your location and connect you to the service centre covering your area.

On 23 September Alzheimer Scotland is holding its second national conference and exhibition focusing on self-directed support for people with dementia. This will take place at the Thistle Hotel in Glasgow from 10am to 4pm.

Self-directed support enables people with dementia to choose, organise and control the type of social care that suits them. Over recent years self-directed support for people with dementia has become more widespread. It is still the exception rather than the rule, but in the past three years the number of people accessing self-directed support in the form of a direct payment has almost doubled. If this trend continues, there will be a big shift in how services are delivered to people with dementia across Scotland. This will have a lot of potential benefits for people with dementia, but there will be challenges for local authorities, service providers and communities as the way services are delivered changes.

You are invited to join us to explore the future of social care for people with dementia and find out how this links to self-directed support. You will also be able to visit our exhibition area, where over 20 exhibitors will be showcasing products, services and solutions to enable people with dementia to have maximum choice and control over their care and support needs.

Conference highlights:

- learn how the choice and control offered by self-directed support can help people with dementia remain active citizens for as long as possible, and improve their quality of life at the later stages of their illness

- explore the role of innovation and design in creative solutions
- hear a keynote address from Michael Matheson MSP, Minister for Public Health, on national developments influencing the future direction of care services for people with dementia
- see our new DVD resource *Taking charge: a guide to self-directed support for people with dementia and their carers*, showcasing how people with dementia are using self-directed support to improve their quality of life.

The conference will be useful for:

- people with dementia, their partners, families and carers
- health and social care professionals
- SDS leads
- policy-makers
- advocates
- legal representatives
- independent living staff
- those involved in the management, delivery, financing, planning, policy or commissioning of services for people with dementia or their families.

For details on how to book a place at the conference visit www.alzscot.org or email externalevents@alzscot.org. If you would like to host an exhibition stand please email externalevents@alzscot.org or call 0141 410 1068.

Make Every Moment Count – new resource from Care Inspectorate

“Make every moment count” is not just a good maxim for living, it is now the title of a new resource giving easy-to-read guidance for everyone supporting someone in the care sector. The aim of *Make Every Moment Count* is to highlight how making the most of every moment when supporting someone can make a real difference to that person’s quality of life in very meaningful ways, whether the person is being cared for in a hospital, care home or in the person’s own home.

A key message is for staff to re-think what is meant by ‘activity’ and see it as everything that the person does from the moment they get up in the morning to the moment they go to sleep at night. Activity is thus more than a programme of planned or co-ordinated events – it is about engaging in everyday life.

The resource is an evidence-based guide, with five key messages and links to useful websites. It is written in the style

of a personal message from the person being cared for – *A guide for you when supporting me* – which emphasises the importance of person-centred care and individuality. The key messages are:

- get to know me
- it’s not just what you do – it’s how you make me feel
- know what I can do and support me to do it
- help me feel comfortable, safe and secure in my surroundings
- remember little things all add up.

To produce the resource, the Care Inspectorate worked in partnership with the Scottish Government, NHS Scotland, Scottish Care, local authorities and Alzheimer Scotland. Copies have been issued to all care homes for older people and all care at home services in Scotland. It can be viewed, along with an explanatory film, at www.careinspectorate.com; more copies of the pocket sized guide, the DVD, an explanatory poster and a poster version of the guide can be ordered from the Care Inspectorate on 0845 600 9527.

Introducing the Scottish Dementia Research Consortium



The Scottish Dementia Research Consortium (SDRC) supports high quality dementia research across Scotland. Its aims are:

- to bring together Scottish-based dementia researchers from all disciplines
- to pool talent among researchers and promote collaboration between them
- to encourage more joint research applications and secure more funding for research
- to represent Scotland’s dementia research interests nationally and internationally
- to involve people with dementia and their families in research policy
- to inform the public about dementia research taking place in Scotland
- to support the Scottish Government in implementing its policies for improving dementia services.

Membership of the SDRC is open to anyone who is interested in dementia research, planning to start a research project, or currently involved in the dementia research community. People with dementia, their carers and relatives who are interested in research or are registered with the Scottish Dementia Clinical Research Network can also join.

For more information or to join the SDRC please email SDRC@alzscot.org or call 0141 410 1068.



“If I can get a smile on someone’s face then I’ve done my job” Carol McPhail, Erskine

Welfare reform update – the Bedroom Tax.

Major changes to the welfare benefits system started to come into force in April this year. Although most of the changes apply only to people of working age, Alzheimer Scotland has had some enquiries from older people who are concerned they may be affected, particularly by the so-called Bedroom Tax. The 'bedroom tax' is the popular name for a change to the way housing benefit is calculated. It affects working age people living in a housing association or council house whose house is considered to be under-occupied. The idea is that people who have more bedrooms than they need will receive reduced housing benefit payments.

Here are the key facts:

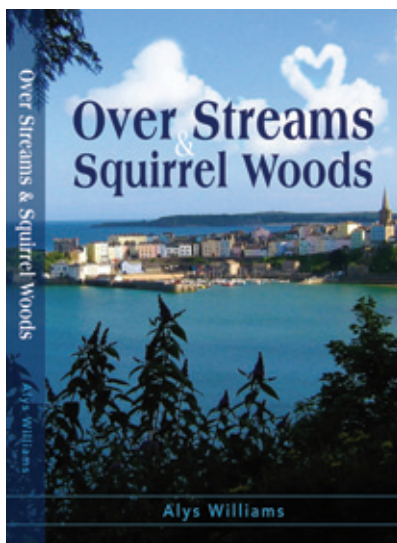
- the bedroom tax only affects working age people
- if you or your partner are over the qualifying age for state Pension Credit you won't be affected. It doesn't matter whether or not you actually get Pension Credit, it's just about whether you have reached an age when you can apply for it if you want to
- the bedroom tax only affects people who are renting social housing (a housing association or council house flat or house). There is already a limit on housing benefit paid to people renting from private landlords
- the bedroom tax is based on the number of extra bedrooms you have that you don't use. If you are affected by the tax and have one spare bedroom, your housing benefit will be reduced by 14%. If you have more than one spare bedroom

it will be reduced by 25%. Those affected will have to make up the shortfall in their rent payments by other means, or move to a smaller property where their housing benefit covers the rent

- bedrooms for live-in or overnight carers are not counted as being spare

- if you are a couple, the Government expects you to share a bedroom. If you use separate bedrooms for reasons related to dementia or other illness or disability, you should contact the council and ask them not to count the second room as spare. If they refuse, you can ask for a form to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment.

Book review: Over Streams and Squirrel Woods



Alys Williams (a pseudonym) writes about the six year journey undertaken by her and her mother Catrin through dementia with Lewy bodies. Alys asks if the human brain can still be creative and powerful even when damaged by dementia. She sees that fantasy and reality merge in her mother's mind and that she seems to have an alternative world where she is powerful and resourceful,

in contrast to her trapped and claustrophobic reality. She writes alternate chapters from Catrin's point of view, based on what was said and observed.

"This was an extremely well written and insightful book. I liked the author's decision to write as if her mother was expressing her own thoughts and feelings. The book gives a very accurate account of what it is like to care for someone with Lewy body dementia and, very importantly, the guilt associated when a loved one has to go into care. Although not all the practical aspects apply to individuals living in Scotland, the emotions expressed are universal. It's a harrowing read but it's very sensitively written and I would recommend it."

Susan Rendell, Alzheimer Scotland Outreach Worker

Over Streams and Squirrel Woods by Alys Williams. ISBN 978-1456787769. This self-published book can be purchased online via Amazon as a paperback at £10.73 or e-book at £4.10 (prices correct at April 2013).

Scotland's first national LGBT helpline

Scotland's first national LGBT helpline started taking calls in May. Operated by the LGBT Health and Wellbeing Centre in Edinburgh, it provides information and emotional support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, along with their families, friends and supporters. The helpline is open on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 12.00 pm to 9.00 pm and you can get in touch on 0300 123 2523.

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