

Mid and East Lothian Services Newsletter

Welcome to our new 'bi-monthly' newsletter. To help keep us more connected, we have decided to introduce more regular communications, since we are unable to **see** each other during this period of lockdown.

Dementia Awareness Week 2020, 1st-7th June

Dementia Awareness Week is normally Alzheimer Scotland's chance to shout about our work, campaign for change and encourage support – and both national and locality teams spend many months preparing for this.

Our focus this year will be on our social media platforms. We will use the week to talk about some key elements of our support, taking a theme a day and providing as much information/stats/conversation as possible. Now, more than ever, connectivity is key and we'll be actively encouraging you to contact us, ask us questions and be part of our community. This social media approach will form the basis of an ask of our supporters – to share our posts with their networks.



A programme of events for the week is enclosed and we hope you are able to join us at <https://www.facebook.com/alzscotedinburghandlothians/> for live and recorded performances of music, storytelling and poetry, or to tap into advice, information and emotional support from our Dementia Advisor (Mid and East Lothian) and Carer Project Worker (Midlothian).

It is also **Volunteers' Week**, and we will be weaving thank you messages and promoting our fantastic volunteers throughout across the week.

Please be reassured that we will continue to provide our usual supports during this period too. We are mindful that not everyone is digitally connected.



Lisa Moodie
Locality Leader



**Purple
Alert**

To help increase the Purple Alert online community further, we're urging everyone to download and sign up to the free app. For more information please visit www.purplealert.org.uk

Information Section

We appreciate this is an unsettling and stressful time for everyone and actively encourage people living with dementia and their carers to contact us as and when you need someone to speak to. We are available to offer information, advice and emotional support. We cannot offer personalised medical advice but will direct you to other reliable sources of information.

- Michael Huddleston (Dementia Advisor, Mid and East Lothian) can be contacted on 07831 859490 or mhuddleston@alzscot.org
- Jacqui Reade (Carer Project Worker, Midlothian) can be contacted on 07979 954876 or jreade@alzscot.org
- Alzheimer Scotland's 24-hour dementia helpline 0808 808 3000

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Volunteers' Week (1st-7th June)

When we learned it would not be possible to continue our visiting befriending and community groups, many of our wonderful volunteers agreed to adapt their role to offer telephone befriending support to people living with dementia and their carers. By the time you read this, they will have made over 100 calls to 30 different people, providing an invaluable social contact for many at risk of isolation and loneliness. We have already received many comments of gratitude from recipients of the call and their families. On Thursday 4th June we will be holding a digital gathering to reflect on their experiences and acknowledge their contribution to supporting people with dementia in East and Midlothian.

We would also like to thank all our volunteers who until the COVID-19 outbreak supported us to run Dementia Cafés and a range of community groups, as well as providing administrative support in our office. It's easy to say, but truly meant, we could not do what we do without you. Thank you.



Michael Huddleston
Dementia Advisor

Carers' Week (8th-15th June)

This year during Carers Week, people are facing new challenges. They are taking on more than usual, and it is so important we recognize the vital contribution made by unpaid carers. The theme of the week is 'making carers visible'; looking to everyone in the community to commit to making improvements in unpaid carers lives, from employers, GP surgeries and local businesses, recognizing that with a little help from them, a big difference can be made.

Calling all creative carers out there! I am looking for a poem or a short story, to open your heart to us and put down in words anything carer related. You can put your name to it or do it anonymously and send to me at 3 Edinburgh Road, Dalkeith EH22 4RN or email me jreade@alzscot.org to reach me by Friday 6th June.

I am also looking for carers to take part in a 10 minute 'Carers Conversations' over the phone. We will have a general chat about the 'caring role'. I will ask 5 questions (which you will know prior to the call and we can discuss). I hope to use these conversations with your permission in some way during Carers Week to highlight to others some of the main issues facing unpaid carers both generally and specific to the last 10 weeks.

A programme of events will be shared the week before. We will be connecting digitally with online chats, telephone calls and through our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/alzscotedinburghandlothians/>

For now, stay safe and take care and for all things carer related, please contact me or Michael Huddleston (contact details in Information section)



Jacqui Reade
Project Worker (Carer Support)

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Post Diagnostic Support with our Dementia Link Workers (Mid and East Lothian)

Dementia Link Workers provide post diagnostic support to people who have had a recent diagnosis of dementia and are referred into the service by the local Dementia Team.

Their contact details are:

East Lothian



Erika Smith
07468 708816
erikasmith@alzscot.org

Mondays, Wednesdays and
Thursdays



Stephanie Heasman
07823 550513
sheasman@alzscot.org

Monday-Friday

Midlothian



Alison Hagarty
07825 372216
ahagarty@alzscot.org

Monday and Tuesday 8.30-4.00
and Wednesday 8.30-12.00



Marian Garcia
07769 298 651
mgarcia@alzscot.org

Wednesdays 8 to 11:30 am
and Thursdays and Fridays 8 to
3:30

The Dementia Link Workers in Midlothian and East Lothian continue supporting people living with dementia and their carers during the lockdown, using digital platforms and telephone calls. They are also organising online coffee mornings to promote peer support among people with dementia and their carers.

As part of the Dementia Awareness Week (DAW) 2020, all the Link Workers in Scotland will walk/cycle/run/skip/dance a minimum of 5.9 miles each to collectively travel the length of Scotland. They will spread their activity throughout DAW. A "Just Giving" page has been set up and money will go towards Alzheimer Scotland. The link to the Just Giving page is:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/linkworkerswalkscotlandfordementia>

Community Activities

GoTo Meeting is a digital platform we use for our Friday Tea & Blether group for people living with dementia. These sessions help reduce social isolation, improve well-being and give each member peer support. It is so important to stay connected, and even more so during these tough times. We plan to increase the number of sessions available each week and are learning new ways to deliver stimulating, therapeutic activities remotely.



Carol Hamilton
Community Activities Organiser

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Art by Post

The Southbank Centre has started a new project called “Art by Post”. It is aimed at people who are having to stay at home during the current Covid-19 outbreak. In this project, four artists will share their experience and produce some booklets on how to get started.

We are hoping that all the people living with dementia, carers, family members, staff and volunteers who are part of the Alzheimer Scotland family, would like to join us in creating some artwork. We already know how inspirational you can all be, so if you would like to take part, and would be willing to share your work with us, we will gather it together and use it for a project later in the year.

The first subject is poetry, and we have enclosed the first booklet with this newsletter. In this booklet, a poet called Shazea, talks about creative writing, and gives us some easy to follow steps to help produce a piece of poetry. In this guide, she has focused on a tree.

The booklet mentions sending your work to the Southbank Centre and, of course, you can do that if you wish, but we plan to collect any work which people might be willing to share, in a few weeks’ time. We imagine that any poetry, or any artwork produced when the next booklets arrive, would make a wonderful collection to share with ourselves and others.

We hope that the booklets may give you some ideas and help to guide you through the process. We also hope, that taking part in this project, will be fun and offer a sense of satisfaction. So, if you feel inspired, please join us. Let’s show everyone what a creative, talented group of people we can be.



Karen Fernie
Day Opportunities Organiser

You can call 0808 808 3000 anytime or email us: helpline@alzscot.org.



Further information about dementia and the support we provide can be found on our website www.alzscot.org.



Follow us on Facebook at Alzheimer Scotland – Edinburgh and Lothians

