

## Scottish Chamber Orchestra Re:Connect Tea Dance

A recent Scottish Dementia Working Group (SDWG) project, helping to organise an afternoon tea dance, was a slight departure from the Group's normal work of supporting research and influencing policy, but was equally as important as it involved championing change to help deliver a truly dementia friendly, accessible event.

The project came about as a result of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra's (SCO) charity partnership with Alzheimer Scotland. Through this partnership the SCO wanted to hold a dementia friendly concert, to offer the best and most accessible experience as possible for people living with dementia and their carers.



SDWG members joined a small working group to ensure the perspective of those with lived experience was at the heart of all aspects of the arrangements for the concert. Members were consulted on matters including the concert's content, accessibility, and marketing.

Group member, Kenny Moffat, took part in an interview for a promotional blog for the concert, he spoke about how music has been a part of his life, the impact music has had on him, and his involvement in helping to organise the event. The promotional flyer for the concert also carried a quote from Kenny –

“ This Dementia Friendly event has been organised in partnership with people living with dementia and their carers. The concert will be unique because of its informal and friendly atmosphere where everyone understands one another, and everyone faces the same challenges. We are hopeful that this will be the start of a programme of similar events. ”

Six SDWG members, along with carers, attended what was a ‘sold out’ event on the 7th February in the Queens Hall, Edinburgh.

From the moment the first note was played, and SCO members entered the hall and moved amongst the audience playing their instruments, guests were entertained to an afternoon of classic tunes, Scottish and Irish reels and jigs, and some well-known waltzes and polkas. By the concert finale, Strauss’s Radetzky March, there was hand clapping and foot tapping. And the cakes were great too!

It was a fun and informal afternoon and, as Kenny said on the day, it will hopefully be the start of a programme of similar dementia friendly events.

