

Visit to Kilmarnock Dementia Resource Centre

Hearing the widest range of lived experience is vital to the success of the work of the Scottish Dementia Working Group (SDWG) and National Dementia Carers Action Network (NDCAN). That's why hearing the voice of those who engage with our localities is extremely important, and working with colleagues in our Brain Health & Dementia Resource Centres (DRC) is key to that. SDWG and NDCAN members were delighted to be invited to join the weekly Coffee Catch-Up group in the Kilmarnock DRC at the beginning of May, to chat about our active voice work, their own lived experience, and what membership of the groups means to them.

Stuart Dougall spoke about his journey following his diagnosis with dementia in January 2022, at the age of 58, to joining the SDWG in November 2022 and his current work with the group, including his participation in current research activities and awareness raising of young onset dementia to help tackle stigma and stereotypes faced by people with dementia.



Kilmarnock DRC



Stuart Dougall

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Joanna Boddy referred to her experience as a carer for her mother, spoke about how she had become involved in NDCAN, and highlighted some of the work she had been involved in with the group, including the Fair Dementia Care Commission.

Members of the Active Voice team provided an overview of the overall approach to enabling and promoting the diverse voices of people with dementia and carers to campaign for, promote and uphold rights and drive change. Highlighting the achievements of that work over the years. The team introduced the 'Capturing Everyday Conversations' toolkit designed to help record the information that colleagues in localities hear from those who engage with them every day – including a 'Share your story' postcard and 'Today I'm thinking about' form.

The session started with a right good singalong and ended with a coffee and networking with those in attendance. It was a great event, and we hope that this will be the start of locality engagement activity across the country and look forward to more visits over the coming months.

