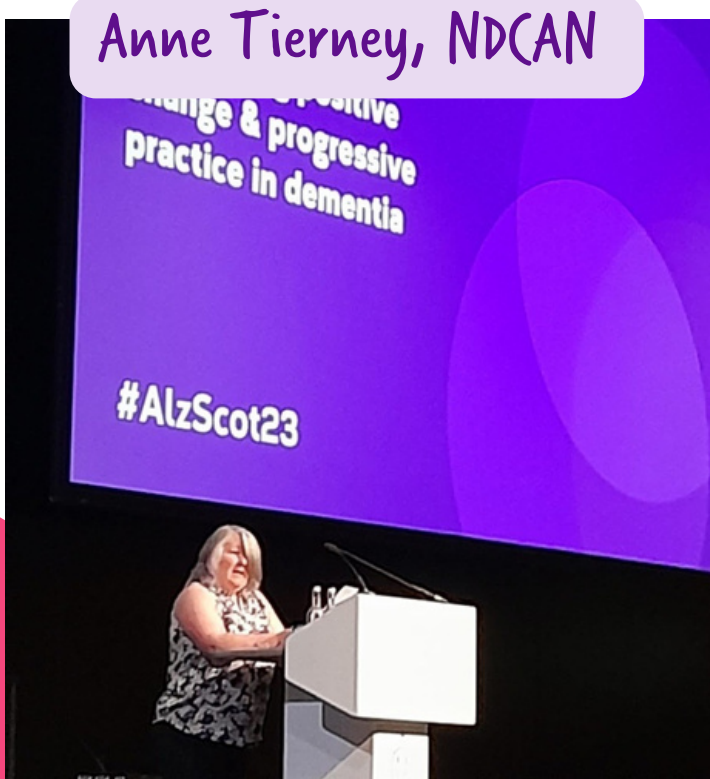


Alzheimer Scotland Annual Conference 2023

Alzheimer Scotland's Annual Conference is always a highlight in the SDWG and NDCAN calendar – it's a great opportunity to listen, to learn, to catch-up with old friends, and to make new ones. It's a chance to engage and to share experiences. And this year's conference was one of the best, with our group members at the heart of the day.



Welcoming delegates to the Conference, SDWG member Stuart Dougall spoke about the difference that Alzheimer Scotland support had made early in his dementia journey and the importance of innovative practice in helping people to live well with dementia. Anne Tierney from NDCAN highlighted the work of the group and the challenge that current carers have finding time to campaign for change. She took the opportunity to encourage delegates, both current and former dementia carers, to consider joining NDCAN so that their personal experiences can help shape the group's campaigning and awareness raising work.

The first session of the day looked at how innovative work and progressive practice is helping to support the dementia community. SDWG and NDCAN members Christine and Bill Alexander shared their story of living together with dementia; highlighted the support and dedication of Alzheimer Scotland staff and front line services where they live; and spoke about the opportunity they have to shape policy, practice and care through their Active Voice work.

During lunch, delegates were entertained by the Every Voice Community Choir, including SDWG members Tony Worthington and Danny McDonald, following which the Conference explored the issue of women's brain health and dementia, to get a better understanding of the issues facing women today. Introducing the session, NDCAN member Thea Laurie emphasised that women's brain health must be a priority; highlighted that brain health is not mentioned in the Scottish Government's Women's Health Plan; and called for data on women living with dementia to be included in the Plan. As Thea said 'It is as if a vital chapter has been missed out'.



Thea Laurie, NDCAN



Stuart Dougall, SDWG

& Active Voice Lead
Wendy Rankin-Smith



Christine & Bill Alexander,
SDWG & NDCAN



The final session of the day considered how research, learning and developments are offering hope for the future. SDWG member Rynagh Flynn kicked off this session by sharing personal experiences of her diagnosis; speaking about her membership of Join Dementia Research; her contact with Scottish Brain Sciences; and her participation in dementia research which has offered her hope and helped improve her quality of life.

Throughout the day SDWG and NDCAN members engaged with representatives from the dozens of organisations represented at the Conference, and provided information on our campaigning and awareness raising work to the steady stream of delegates who visited our Active Voice information stand. Recordings of all the Conference sessions are available on the Alzheimer Scotland website

Rynagh Flynn, SDWG



Active Voice group members from SDWG & NDCAN