

Mid and East Lothian Services Newsletter

An update on our support

I hope this update finds you and your loved ones safe and well. It is over four months since the coronavirus pandemic impacted on Alzheimer Scotland. We are now beginning to see glimpses of 'normality' and are optimistic that this will mean we can recommence some of our local support and activity. At the absolute forefront of our plans is safety. Things will start slowly and on a small scale, however with the support and agreement of all the relevant Local Authorities, National Government and Public Health guidance we will build on this soon. I would like to thank you all for your ongoing understanding of this and we will keep you up to date on local developments.

Care home visiting

Alzheimer Scotland welcomes the Scottish Government's announcement to recommence family visiting and communal activities for people living in Scotland's care homes. This is a much-needed step forward for those people who have been unable to visit their loved ones in care homes throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

Make dementia care fairer

We are renewing calls for people to sign up to our Fair Dementia Care campaign. We believe people with advanced dementia deserve equal access to free healthcare in line with other progressive illnesses. Please support us and ask your friends and family to do the same.

<https://www.alzscot.org/fair-dementia-care-sign-up-form>

If you are not online and would like to know more about the campaign, or to share your support, please get in touch by phone.

To keep up-to-date with our work, find out what support is available near you, access information or donate, please visit www.alzscot.org, give a call on 0131 654 114, or email midandeastlothianservices@alzscot.org



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

Memory Tree

It is Alzheimer Scotlands' 40th in September and we are asking you to share something about your experience with us. It could be a staff member who supported you that you would like to thank, or to tell us the difference our support has made to you. It could be a good news event or story that involved us, or a group you've been part of that has meant a lot to you. You could include your photo or do a drawing.

In the envelope or attachments with your newsletter you will find a blank leaf. Please write your 'experience' on the leaf and return to us in the stamped addressed envelope (or by email) and help us spread your memories of Alzheimer Scotland during the time we have shared together, and we will add your leaf to our Memory Tree.



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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.

Garden Visits

As well as continuing to provide phone and video calls to support people living with dementia and their carers, Dementia Advisors are now permitted to resume garden visits while following clear health and safety protocols. Please get in touch with me if you would like to discuss the possibility of an in-person meeting.

Volunteer Telephone Companions

Our wonderful volunteers have continued to provide weekly telephone calls to people living with dementia and their carers. Since mid-April, 33 people have received nearly 350 calls, providing an invaluable social contact for those at high risk of isolation and loneliness.

Alzheimer Scotland Websites

Our website gathers together some fantastic original resources including videos and podcasts sharing information and advice on key issues affecting people living with dementia and their carers, including sleeping well, eating well, and coping with stress: <https://www.alzscot.org/information-during-coronavirus>

www.connectingpeopleconnectingsupport.online is another excellent online resource developed by Alzheimer Scotland's Allied Health Professionals and Sheffield Hallam University.

Emergency Information Online (EIO) Cards

An EIO card is a small PVC card with an inbuilt chip that can be read by a smartphone and can act as your voice in an emergency. It can inform first responders, paramedics and people who are helping you in a critical situation of any allergies, medical conditions, next of kin information and whatever else you feel needs to be communicated in a crisis. We have a supply of free EIO cards to share with people with dementia and their carers. If you would like to receive a code, please get in touch and I can organise this.

Face Mask Exemptions

While it is now mandatory to wear a face covering in enclosed spaces – such as shops or on public transport – you are considered exempt if “you have a health condition or you are disabled and a face covering would be inappropriate because it would cause difficulty, pain or severe distress or anxiety or because you cannot apply a covering and wear it in the proper manner safely and consistently.”

We can post you an “I have an illness” card, which should be sufficient to prove your right to exemption, or you can download and print “Face Mask Exempt” badges from Euan’s Guide:

<https://www.euansguide.com/news/face-mask-exempt-badges/>

We appreciate that not everyone is online and would encourage you to get in touch if you are interested in any information in our newsletter that is primarily shared digitally. We can verbally communicate or post printed copies of information that might benefit you.



Michael Huddleston, Dementia Advisor (mhuddleston@alzscot.org / 07831 859 490)

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Coming out of Lockdown

Many carers will feel the need for a break from their caring role as we come out of lockdown. VOCAL's Wee Breaks supports unpaid carers in Midlothian to take a break, be that a short stay away, a day trip, or an activity. You can contact me to discuss further or visit the Wee Breaks website <https://weebreaks.com/> for more information.

The last few months have been challenging, and I can't praise carers enough for how they have adapted during this time, embracing technology and joining one-to-one and group video chats to enable us to still offer support. If you have been unable to do so, either because of lack of a computer, laptop or smart phone, or not feeling confident enough to come online, please contact us and we may be able to support you to rectify this.

There are many changes coming out of lockdown: mandatory wearing of face coverings on public transport and in shops, various rules regarding meeting other people, what businesses are open, amongst other guidelines. Full details can be found on the Scottish Government's website, <https://www.gov.scot/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance/>. However, if you don't have access to the internet or have any concerns or questions, please do contact us and we will do our very best to answer or point you in the right direction.

I would like remind carers that I am still working and offering support by telephone and video calls, both one-to-one and group chat. If you feel you need some support relating to your caring role, please contact me on 0131 654 4355 / 07979 954 876 or email jreade@alzscot.org

For now, stay safe and take care



Jacqui Reade
Project Worker (Carer Support)

Do it for Dementia – All together this August

Alzheimer Scotland's virtual event series has been a huge success and there's still plenty of time to join us. Choose a challenge, donate or fundraise and have fun whilst supporting people living with dementia and their families.

This August we'd love to see you get together with family or friends and complete a challenge together!

If you don't fancy lacing up the trainers for a fitness challenge why not choose an indoor activity? All participants will receive an Alzheimer Scotland t-shirt and a medal upon completion, so what are you waiting for!

Join #TeamAlzScot today:

<https://www.alzscot.org/our-work/events/do-it-for-dementia>

Need some inspiration? Speak to our dedicated events team who can't wait to hear from you and can give you lots of ideas for getting together this August and doing something amazing for Alzheimer Scotland!

events@alzscot.org

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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.

Our contact details are:

East Lothian



Erika Smith
07468 708816
erikasmith@alzscot.org

Monday-Thursday



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 8-3:30

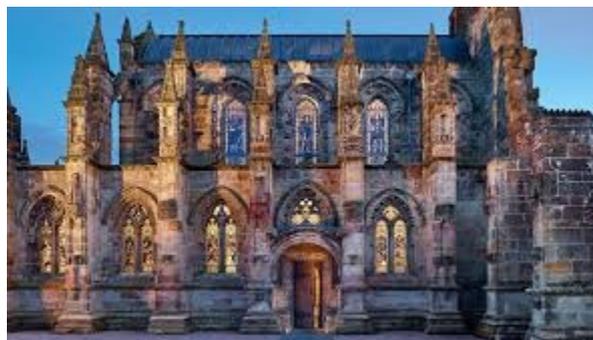
We continue supporting people living with dementia and their carers during the lockdown, using digital platforms and telephone calls. We are also organising online coffee mornings to promote peer support among people with dementia and their carers.

Fundraising Walk

As part of the Dementia Awareness Week (DAW) 2020, all the Link Workers in Scotland walked, cycled or ran a minimum of 5.9 miles each to collectively travel the length of Scotland. This was very successful and as well as getting us fitter raised more than £5000. Thank you to everyone who contributed!

Roslin Chapel Virtual Experience

Alzheimer Scotland have linked-up with Roslin Chapel to explore and learn about some of the amazing features of the Chapel. If you would like to experience visiting Roslin Chapel digitally in a group please call 0131 654 1114 or contact chamilton@alzscot.org for more information.



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Digital Tea & Blether

I have had great feedback from those who attend Tea & Blether digitally. They provide each other with fantastic peer support and share lots of laughs. This helps to prevent social isolation and improve their emotional well-being. One group member told me how she “looks forward to a Friday to put the world to rights”; another reflected how important it has been to keep in touch with everyone so that “when we get back to meeting in person it won’t feel awkward”; and everyone agreed with the sentiment of the member who said “the group has made such a difference to me”. We also know that the benefits of therapeutic activities for people with dementia outlast the duration of the activity, with carers reporting that their loved one has experienced improved mood and communication after taking part in the group.

Owing to the success of our digital Tea & Blether to date, I am currently setting up additional groups to reach more people who would benefit from this opportunity. If you or someone you know is interested, please get in touch by calling 0131 654 1114 or email chamilton@alzscot.org

Roslin Chapel Virtual Experience

Alzheimer Scotland have linked up with Roslin Chapel to explore and learn about some of the amazing features of the Chapel. If you would like to experience visiting Roslin Chapel digitally in a group. Call 0131 6541114 or contact chamilton@alzscot.org for more information.



Carol Hamilton
Community Activities Organiser

Art by Post

In our last newsletter, I let you know that The Southbank Centre had started a new project called “Art by Post”, aimed at people who were having to stay at home during the current Covid-19 outbreak. In this project, four artists are sharing their experience and have produced 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. 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.

Part 1, which came with our last newsletter, was about poetry. Parts 2 and 3 are enclosed with this newsletter. Part 2 is called, “The Show Must Go On” and is about music and Part 3 is again about poetry but has a slightly different approach to the first.

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



Karen Fernie
Day Opportunities Organiser

Mid and East Lothians Services, 3 Edinburgh Road, Dalkeith, EH22 1LA Telephone 0131 654 1114
E-mail MidandEastlothianServices@alzscot.org Website www.alzscot.org

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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

