



Media Release

Thursday 20th July 2017

Dementia friendly funding boost for Uist and Benbecula

The islands of Uist are to become dementia friendly thanks to £150,000 funding from the Life Changes Trust and £42,000 from the Robertson Trust.

The money will be used to improve the quality of life for people living with dementia and their carers on the island communities of Berneray, North Uist, Benbecula, South Uist and Eriskay.

The aim of the project, run by Tagsa Uibhist, is to raise awareness of dementia, reduce stigma, and enable people living with a diagnosis of dementia to live well within their own community.

For people living with dementia, life can often be difficult and isolating. Tagsa Uibhist will set up regular groups for people with dementia and their carers, across different locations where they are needed most.

The project will work in partnership with statutory services, voluntary organisations, communities and people with dementia, their carers and their families. Tagsa Uibhist will also run a dementia resource hub and manage a range of services including:

- housing advice and support
- regular meeting group and social activities
- home respite for carers, and a carers' gathering supported by Western Isles Community Care Forum
- dementia awareness training across the isles
- an activity programme for people living with dementia

Dr. Peter Keiller, Chairman of Tagsa Uibhist said: "We are delighted to receive substantial funding for this exciting new project from the Life Changes Trust and the Robertson Trust. A big thank you to Tagsa staff for their hard work in securing this award. This is a major opportunity to bring together people living with dementia, carers, organisations already involved and everyone in our community to find new and better ways to deal with dementia in an inclusive and empowering way for those affected by it."

The funding award is part of a second phase of Dementia Friendly Communities investment from Scottish charity, the Life Changes Trust. The Trust invested £3 million in 14 dementia friendly communities in 2015, the success of which has led to a further investment of £2 million.

Dementia Friendly Communities are places where people affected by dementia, including carers and family members, are included and supported to do the things that matter to them. They also help empower those whose lives are affected by dementia so that they remain integrated in society, live as independently as possible and participate actively in decisions that affect their lives.

Some dementia friendly communities are geographical communities, relating to a specific location like those already established in West Dunbartonshire or Kirriemuir. Others are communities of interest that bring people together because they are interested in similar activities, for example, sport, art, or walking outdoors.

Anna Buchanan, Director of the Life Changes Trust dementia programme said, ""By funding a diverse range of dementia friendly communities throughout Scotland, we are developing a deeper understanding of how to meet the needs of people with dementia and their families. A diagnosis of dementia can lead to social exclusion and isolation, but dementia friendly communities can help prevent this by keeping people included and supported. It is wonderful to welcome Dementia Friendly Uists. This work will make a huge difference to people's lives across the islands and we look forward to learning a lot from this project."

The Life Changes Trust was established by the Big Lottery Fund in April 2013 with a ten year endowment of £50 million to support transformational improvements in the quality of life, well-being, empowerment and inclusion of two groups: people affected by dementia and young people with experience of being in care.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

For more information on Life Change Trust funding for Dementia Friendly Communities, see the Trust website:

<http://www.lifechangestrust.org.uk/projects/dementia-friendly-communities>

***Dementia Words - Our work with people with dementia has shown that the phrase "Dementia sufferers", or using the word suffering to describe dementia has a strongly negative view from people with the condition. We would request that you avoid using the phrase in headlines or in any article you publish to combat the negative way that people with dementia feel the condition is described.**

The Life Changes Trust was established by the Big Lottery Fund in April 2013 with a ten year endowment of £50 million to support transformational improvements in the quality of life, well-being, empowerment and inclusion of people affected by dementia and young people with experience of being in care.

Dementia Friendly Communities include, empower and support people affected by dementia and their carers in every aspect of life, from accessing services to using public transport. They also help empower those whose lives are affected by dementia so that they can remain integrated in society, live as independently as possible and participate actively in decisions that affect their day-to-day lives.

Tagsa Uibhist is a voluntary organisation based in Balivanich on the Isle of Benbecula, an island in the Southern Isles of the Outer Hebrides.

Since being founded in December 1999, Tagsa Uibhist have provided support for carers, people living with dementia and vulnerable people living in their own homes throughout Uist. Throughout their years of operation, the organisation has expanded and now provides a range of services throughout the local community, all of which fit in with the organisation's core objective of meeting the needs of the elderly and vulnerable populations in Uist.

The Robertson Trust is the largest independent grant-making trust in Scotland and has a vision to improve the quality of life and realise the potential of people and communities in Scotland - inspired by the example of founders, the Robertson Sisters. The Trust exists to provide financial support to Scottish charities. In practice, this enables the Trustees to donate to a wide range of charitable objectives where the work takes place in, or has an impact on, Scotland.