



Media Release

Tuesday 25th July 2017

Funding boost for Stirling and Forth Valley dementia friendly neighbourhoods

A partnership of local organisations in Stirling and the Forth Valley has been awarded £225,000 by the Life Changes Trust to enable people living with dementia to remain included and active in their local communities.

The wide ranging partnership, which includes Artlink Central, the University of Stirling, Stirling Council and NHS Forth Valley, will use the funds to involve people with dementia, their families and fellow residents, to create 'participatory neighbourhoods'.

These neighbourhoods will enable local communities to become more supportive of people whose lives are affected by dementia. Research shows that inclusive and supportive communities enable people with dementia and their carers to stay involved in the things that matter to them, which keeps them socially, physically and politically active.

The project will create more dementia-inclusive environments, improve dementia services, and give better access to helpful online resources.

It will also support people with dementia and their families to come together with friends and neighbours to take part in a number of creative activities that will raise awareness about dementia. This will include a 'Neighbourhoods Festival' that involves the wider community.

The funding 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, "Ensuring that people with dementia and their families remain included in their communities, and in society more generally, should be the new 'norm'. People should not become isolated and lonely because they have been diagnosed with dementia, and yet this is often the case. We are delighted to fund this work and hope that it will inspire many other communities to become dementia inclusive."

Kevin Harrison, CEO of Artlink Central said "Artlink Central are delighted to be one of many partners who will be supporting these neighbourhood collaborations between people living with dementia, carers, and local organisations, with support from the Life Changes Trust, for dementia friendly communities in Stirling and Forth Valley. A neighbourhood based approach will challenge and inspire communities to work more closely and creatively with people living with dementia to support independence, inclusion and access. The programme will design, create and test innovative ideas led by participants' lived experience of dementia in relation to the places that matter most to us all in our daily lives."

Professor Judith Phillips, Deputy Principal (Research) at the University of Stirling said "The University of Stirling is delighted to be collaborating on the Stirling and Forth Valley Participatory Neighbourhoods Project. It provides an opportunity for us to build further links with local groups and communities in Stirling in supporting people to live well with dementia. This is a unique opportunity for the University to contribute the expertise and knowledge that we have built over the years on dementia, care, design and the environment. The University has a long-standing commitment to improve the lives of people with dementia and this project will enable us to demonstrate and extend our investment in this field."

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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For further information and for press enquiries contact the Life Changes Trust: Deborah Cowan on 0141 212 9606 or email deborah.cowan@lifechangestrust.org.uk

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.

Organisations participating in and supporting the project are: Artlink Central, University of Stirling, Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise, MacRobert Arts Centre, Stirling Council, Alzheimer Scotland, Memory Friendly Neighbourhoods Network, Stirling Carers Centre, Townbreak, NHS Forth, Valley, SDS Forth Valley, and Scotland's Urban Past.