



Media Release **20th February 2018**

£2.5million further investment to ensure people with dementia stay included in Scottish communities

Scottish charity the Life Changes Trust has doubled their national investment in communities that are dementia friendly, with a second wave of funding to the sum of £2.5 million. This brings their total investment to £5 million in the last three years.

Communities that are inclusive and dementia friendly play a crucial role in ensuring that people with dementia, carers and family members are supported after a diagnosis of dementia.

These communities provide a structure and culture that make it possible for people affected by dementia to do things that matter to them, remain integrated and active in their own communities and participate in decisions that affect their day-to-day lives.

In 2015, the Life Changes Trust initially funded 12 dementia friendly communities over three years. These have developed and grown, creating among them a further 82 new communities. To date, more than 3,400 people with dementia and 2,000 carers have directly benefited from being part of a dementia friendly community.

This new investment of £2.5million will support 14 new communities, as well as providing some longer term support for previously funded communities.

Scotland is leading the way in understanding how communities that are dementia friendly work best.

As well as providing information, support and opportunities, they draw on the abilities that people with dementia still have so they can contribute to their communities. They currently involve people with dementia aged from 39 to 104.

For example, in Stornoway, people with dementia in care homes, supported by the award-winning Arora community, have been sharing their knowledge of local stories, anecdotes and now-unused objects in order to preserve local history and leave a legacy for the local community, museums and researchers. Their contribution has been invaluable.

'Gie it Laldy' in Kilmarnock is a dementia friendly musical theatre community run by Centrestage. On a weekly basis older people (many living with dementia) get together and lead a musical theatre session supported by staff and volunteers, many of them young people. The vibrancy, energy and colour that typifies this 50-strong community is far removed from the usual images portrayed of people living with dementia. This community provides support, friendship and laughter.

With the advice of people with dementia and carers, Glasgow Film Theatre is making sure that people with dementia are not excluded from the cinema-going community, offering monthly 'Movie Memories' film screenings, as well as other multi-arts events across the city.

The British Deaf Association is using their funding to work with the Deaf community in Scotland. They are raising awareness of living with hearing loss and dementia, providing resources to help people with dementia and carers.

Table Tennis Scotland supports people with dementia so they can still keep playing the sport they love or take it up as a new way of keeping fit.

New funding was also awarded to Scottish Ballet, Regional Screen Scotland, Edinburgh Leisure, Dementia Friendly Highlands, Dementia Orkney, the Forget-Me-Not Club in Banchory, Dementia Friendly Uists, Dementia Friendly Pentlands, Stirling and Forth Valley Dementia Friendly Neighbourhoods and care home communities in East Ayrshire and Kelso.

Anna Buchanan, Director of the Life Changes Trust dementia programme said, “The solution to getting it right for people with dementia lies with communities, and the relationships within them. Communities come in all shapes and sizes but any community can become dementia friendly if it follows some basic principles. These principles include focusing more on what people with dementia **can** do rather than what they can’t, and enabling them to do what really matters to them. We need many more communities across Scotland to take this approach so they can support people after a dementia diagnosis and make sure they do not become isolated and lonely.”

For more information about community and dementia, see www.lifechangestrust.org.uk.

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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>

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.

***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.**

In Scotland:

- It is estimated that around 90,000 people have dementia
- The number of people with dementia in Scotland is increasing, because the population is getting older. Based on current dementia prevalence rates, the number of people with dementia in Scotland is projected to double by 2038.
- Dementia costs the country more than cancer, heart disease and stroke put together.