



# **Darnall Dementia Group**



# **Annual Report 2025**



# Welcome to our Annual Report for 2025!



We hope it will give you a glimpse of the many things we have been doing this year.

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A huge thanks to all the many people who have been involved with Darnall Dementia Group throughout the year.

Your support, in so many different ways, has been vital to us.

We are proud to present our report.

We hope you enjoy reading it!



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## **Introduction: From the Chair of the Trustees, Kevan Taylor.**

Welcome to the 2024/25 Annual Report.

Another very successful year supporting our members living with dementia and their families. We continue to provide the “home from home” experience that has been valued and welcomed by our members for over 40 years. Our support is always person-centred and provides a vital lifeline for carers and a very positive experience for our members.

Something that we can all be proud of, and with which I am proud to be associated.

We continue to operate in a difficult environment – particularly financially. We have had to fundraise considerable sums again this year to supplement our contract with Sheffield City Council. Without the additional fundraising, we would not be able to meet our core costs and provide the services so valued by our members and their families.

A huge thank you to all the individuals and Organisations that have contributed to Darnall Dementia Trust. Without your generosity, we would quite simply not have survived.

Sheffield City Council have informed us that there will be no increase in the contract value for next year. As our costs rise with inflation, this is a significant reduction in real terms, and so our financial position for next year will be even more challenging.

A huge thanks to all our Staff, Volunteers and Trustees for their unwavering efforts to support the work of Darnall Dementia Group. Your dedication is what dictates who and what we are, and you should all be very proud of what you do.

The value and thanks received by members and their families are a testament to your work. Thank you for living and demonstrating the values of the Trust that have been supporting people all these years.

And finally, a thank you to our members and your families. You are why we are here, and your constant support and affirmation are also what keep us going! Thank you.

*Kevan*

Kevan Taylor, Chair of Trustees.

## **The Team:**

**Lynsey Button, Day Centre Manager;  
Michael Johnson, Service and Finance  
Administrator;  
Peter Bemba, Rachel Gozzard,  
Fiona Allinson, Moira Cartwright,  
Marwa Shakeri and Rehana Akhtar,  
Day Centre Workers**



**In this picture, the staff are accompanied by some of the  
volunteers: Elaine. Roanna, Jen and Linda**

# About the Day Centre



The Day Centre operates on three days a week: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Each day, we accommodate up to 10 participants. Our experienced staff, along with enthusiastic volunteers and students, provide support and encouragement to all attendees. We offer a diverse range of engaging activities, ensuring that we understand clients' interests and preferences to tailor experiences and activities to individual needs.

In addition to our core team, we welcome visiting professionals such as Andrea Small, who provides music, Wild Science and Paul Barry, who organise sessions focused on promoting laughter, fun, and shared experiences among participants.

A nutritious, tasty and balanced meal is served each day, prepared by the kitchen at Lightwood House, and participants can enjoy a choice of main courses and desserts. We foster a social atmosphere over lunch, with everyone sitting together.

We provide transport based on participants' locations, utilising a minibus from Manor Community Transport, with a staff member always serving as an escort.

**Lynsey Button, Day Centre Manager**



**Volunteers** are involved in a wide range of activities that contribute to the success of the person's experience with us, including outings.



**Volunteers** bring a diversity of skills and develop relationships with attenders,



which enrich the lives of both attenders and the



**volunteers** themselves.

## From Kirsty, who first came as a student on Placement

I started at DDG in the second year of my undergraduate degree on placement, and I thoroughly enjoyed my 8-week placement, so I decided to come back as a volunteer in my third and fourth years.

The staff and attenders at DDG have taught me so much over the years and



provided me with so much valuable experience, which I have been able to draw on when applying for jobs and writing personal statements.

At DDG, there is such a friendly atmosphere between the staff and attenders, meaning everyone feels welcomed and supported in such a diverse and mixed-aged group.

During my fourth year, I was glad to encourage students from another course to go and volunteer

at DDG, as I assured them, they would be welcomed and appreciated at the group, as well as gaining a lot of relevant experience.

It is great to have DDG supporting students from universities, colleges and schools across Sheffield, as there are plenty of opportunities to meet new people, who all provide something new to the Day Centre.

DDG is truly one of the highlights of my University experience, and I will be forever grateful for the support and experience of working with individuals living with dementia, which I gained from the group, and which helped me to outline the career I want to pursue.





**Dancing is a lot of fun.  
We have regular sessions  
with Andrea, singing and  
dancing.  
Other musicians bring  
different music, and the  
variety is very much  
enjoyed.**



## **Lorna, a volunteer, writes:**

In the 1980's, I lived in Sheffield and was employed for a few years in the Darnall Community Work Team. I was involved in what was then called the "EMI (Elderly mentally infirm) Project", which is now Darnall Dementia Group.

When I retired from the Probation Service last year, I contacted DDG to see if I could go back as a volunteer. I met Lynsey, and I have been attending regularly since September last year. I have learnt much since September, mostly about the importance of listening and being aware of people's stories as well as their possible triggers to unhappiness. I have learned that activities are not always what people want; sometimes they want to talk and be listened to, or to be supported to sing the song that is on their mind.

I have also witnessed the pride and satisfaction of people who are living with dementia who have painted something, or stuck something on a place mat and created something beautiful.

The attentiveness of the workers, both paid and voluntary, is what makes DDG so special. The workers know what each individual is interested in, the kinds of pictures they would like to look at in books, the games they might like to play and songs they might like to sing.

The members of the group have complex needs and this can be very challenging. The workers are dedicated and it is not always easy. The staff are adept at diffusing potential conflict situations. I have seen the positive effects of the caring individual approach in responding to people's needs. The members are enabled and supported as far as possible to walk if they want to walk and dance if they want to dance. I have seen the group bring joy to people's faces

There is something special about DDG. Its inclusivity and positivity are a pleasure to be part of.

**Lorna Shaw – Volunteer**



## **Michael, Service and Finance Administrator writes:**

Hi, I'm Michael. I am the Service and Finance Administrator for Darnall Dementia Trust. I have been with the charity for 3 and a half years. At first, I looked after the day-to-day accounts, but over time, my role has grown, and although I still deal with the day-to-day finances for the charity, I am also now responsible for fundraising, and I am part of the Management Team. I also manage all the referrals for new clients that are sent to us by Sheffield City Council and other duties around monitoring, training and liaising with our funders and our auditors.

I feel that I am very lucky - although my role is predominantly administrative (I work from home most of the time), I am able to come to our Day Centre in Darnall on a regular basis, and I get to see the great interaction between our staff and volunteer team and the fabulous people who attend the Day Centre.

At times, my role doesn't feel like a job - it feels like being part of a big family!



**Shaye, a 6<sup>th</sup> Form College student on Placement wrote to us:**

Hiya, it's Shaye from placement. I just wanted to thank you and everyone for being so warm and welcoming whilst I was volunteering. I never felt as if there was any superiority over me when working alongside the staff, and I really enjoyed my time there. You are all such amazing people, and it's a breath of fresh air to see how deeply you care for your clients.

Thank you!





**We have organised several outings this year, some people**



**enjoyed individual visits to places of interest or special memories for them. We also enjoyed visits as a group.**







**V E Day Celebrations: Time for lots of reminiscence and different activities, including making decorations, baking and having a**

**party!**





## How we came to work the way we do.

Ever since the earliest days of what is now Darnall Dementia Group, those involved have aimed to foster a culture that puts the person living with dementia at the centre of the care provided. In 1980, as the idea of the Day Centre was being developed, the community workers, social workers, volunteers, and doctors involved recognised that the old way of treating people living with dementia was outdated and needed to be left behind. They had seen too often that individuals were treated as less than human and knew that a different approach was possible. Their contact with carers highlighted this issue further. The carers they met spoke of beloved relatives experiencing cognitive decline, with little to no help available — often being ignored altogether or confined in institutions where they were frequently treated without dignity.

Carers were fighting for something better for the people they loved and cared for.

### Have you ever wondered why we chose this particular Celtic knot as our logo?

Darnall Dementia Group was set up with the idea that the person living with dementia, their family carers and the carers at Darnall would need to work together to ensure that the Day Centre provided what the person needed. The three loops of the knot are what make the pattern, and each has its part to play and is equally important if real person-centred care is to be provided.



We had been working to provide care that was focused on the person for some years before we met Tom Kitwood, who was beginning to write his seminal work on person-centred care

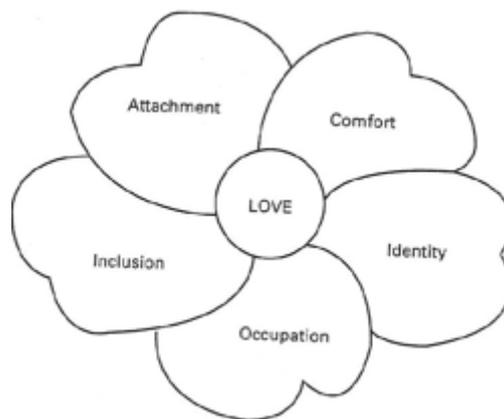
Tom Kitwood's theories on dementia care—especially his pioneering concept of person-centred care—haven't been replaced, but they've certainly evolved and expanded over time. His work laid the foundation for a major paradigm shift in how we understand and support people living with dementia, and it continues to influence practice globally.

He introduced the idea that dementia care should focus on personhood, not just pathology. His model emphasised:

- Valuing the person beyond their diagnosis
- Understanding biography and life story
- Respecting psychological needs: comfort, identity, attachment, occupation and inclusion

- Challenging depersonalising practices in institutional care also proposed a formula for understanding dementia holistically, which showed how a person living with dementia experiences their condition, depending on their personality, their biography, their health, the level of physical brain damage and crucially, how they were viewed and treated in the world.

Tom Kitwood proposed that a good model of dementia care meant paying attention to the need for Comfort, Identity, Occupation, Inclusion and Attachment. He created an image of a flower, with petals representing these needs, and the centre of the flower contained the word Love.



The need for comfort, physical, psychological, spiritual and emotional, is attended to by making the environment as relaxed, safe and homely as possible, listening to what people tell us they need and observing and responding to how they appear in themselves: they may need to sit comfortably and chat, or they may need to walk, or dance and be active.

The need for identity is met by getting to know the person and tailoring the provision of their care depending on how they prefer to be addressed, their background and life history, including family, religious affiliations, work and any other significant factors, their likes and dislikes, their preferences for activity and fun, and for the kind of social contact they enjoy.



The need for occupation is met by offering and enabling meaningful activities and contact which is tailored to the person's preferences, their physical and psychological energy and ability on any particular day, and the level of need for support in whatever is offered.



To help to meet the need for inclusion, seating is carefully considered, and activities



are planned with preferences and abilities in mind. Each person's needs for support are considered, such as attention at specific times of the day, People need

to feel they are part of things as much as they want to be and to feel that they belong, even if they are not taking part in a particular activity.

As a person lives longer with dementia, the human need for attachment does not diminish; in fact, it almost certainly increases, because of the difficulty in making new



attachments. Relationships between people are carefully nurtured, so that the person feels known, cared for and loved, but at the same time, working to ensure that they do not become dependent on any one person, so that on days when that person is absent, they can still feel at ease. Sometimes people respond well to having a favourite object, such as a doll, like the one pictured on the front cover of this report. The person interacting with the doll is quite aware that this is not a real baby, but the presence of the doll brings comfort, as it is a reminder of the need to be needed, to be the centre of

another's world, a nurturer, and the provider of fun and playfulness.

These needs are basic needs that all humans share, but someone living with dementia may find it difficult to meet these needs for themselves and may also find that their condition leads to these needs being neglected by others. The need for love never diminishes, and good dementia care will be given with love.

Our aim at Darnall Dementia Group is to have the flower constantly in our minds and to shape each day around meeting all these needs

Tom Kitwood knew, and demonstrated in his work, that good care can only be provided if the carers are cared for. This means family carers and friends, and formal carers in places like Day Centres. They, too, need these principles to be applied to them, to be able to carry out the tasks that living with dementia requires.

At Darnall, these principles underpin everything that we do. From our very first meetings with people, to their first attendance at the Day Centre and for the weeks and months that follow, we aim to invite those living with dementia and their

caregivers to collaborate with and inform us as best they can about what they need and want, and how we can provide it.

We were greatly privileged to meet Tom Kitwood, who twice visited Darnall with a colleague from Bradford University. They conducted a Dementia Care Mapping evaluation of the Day Centre. We learned so much from that exercise, about really tuning in to what is going on with people, rather than thinking that, because we had provided something, people would be happy. Photographs were taken of our Day Centre, which Kitwood used to illustrate his book, “Dementia Reconsidered.” Two DCM evaluations have been conducted since that first one, and we are now planning our third.

We aim to ensure that the principles of person-centred care inform our development and learning. Considering developments in the understanding of cultural needs, how we can use technology to enhance the experience at the day centre, how trauma may affect a person’s reaction to cognitive decline, and how working with family carers can improve the quality of the care we provide.

We aim to make the experience at the Day Centre as good as possible. If people feel that they are treated as the individual person that they are, if they are comfortable, included, attended to and listened to, provided with opportunities for meaningful occupation and agency: making choices, making connections with others, validated in whatever their experience is, if they feel loved and cared for, then we hear from them that they have enjoyed their time with us. We hear from their family carers that the time their person is at the Day Centre is valued, because their person is enjoying their time there, and they don’t have to worry and fret about them. Some people have said that being at Darnall is like being in a family – belonging and loved. We have heard people say that Darnall is where they wish they or their loved one to be cared for when the time comes. We aim to continue to strive to hold these principles at our core and to continue to provide the very best for the people who come to the Day Centre, their family carers and the care team.

**Lisa Heller**



## About Roy

My 90-year-old husband Roy, has several illnesses, including Alzheimer's, macular degeneration and oesophageal cancer.

I was nervous, initially, about letting other people look after him, but I'm now so glad that I trusted Darnall Dementia Group!

The staff and all of the helpers are caring, dedicated and efficient people, led by an excellent leader, Lynsey.

I cannot thank them enough for their kindness and support.

They are very special people who really care about our special people!



Thank you.

From Betty Shirt.

## **St. Albans Christian Community**

Since 2020, St. Albans Christian Community has been based at St. Albans Church, where Darnall Dementia Group meet as well.

It has been joyful to share the space. We are not just separate groups that meet but have been able to share resources and ideas. Some examples are Darnall Dementia Group offered to leave up bunting and decorations at events like the King's coronation and VE Day.

And St. Albans have shared remembrance stars and decorations like Christmas and Easter.

When the Community are given food from a local pantry, they will offer it to the volunteers and staff at Darnall Dementia Group. We look forward to seeing how we can work together in the future – including plans to improve access to the toilet facilities.

### **Gina, Vicar of St. Albans.**

**Gina is pictured here with Kinder, who answers all queries to do with the Church.**





**Peter writes:**

“Driving for the attenders at DDG is a great way to start work in the morning.

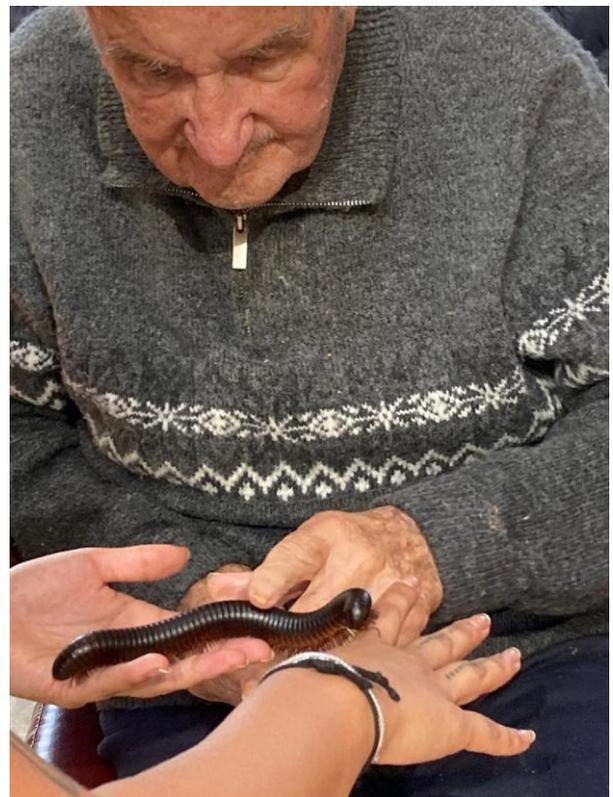
The journey starts our fun day at the centre, travelling with the people we support.”

As well as working as a Day Centre Worker, Peter has been driving for us for over ten years. Peter is a trusted driver whose loyalty and commitment shine

through his work with the attenders, who are confident about him bringing them from home to the Centre and taking them back home at the end of the day. They enjoy his company and love him.



**Lots of different activities at the Day Centre.**



**A visit from "Wild Science"**



**We were introduced to**



**a variety of different  
animals**



**The visit from Wild Science prompted memories of living with pets. We shared our stories about pets and animals, experiences, preferences and some very funny memories of pets.**



**Even though the animals we met that day were unusual, most people really enjoyed meeting and handling them.**

**As you can see from the pictures in this report, the workers in the Day Centre have been able to provide a variety of activities and maintain many contacts.**

**We are hugely grateful to all the staff, volunteers and students who continue to work with ingenuity, patience, loyalty, resilience and tireless commitment to providing a high-quality service to our attenders**



**and their carers. As you have read, it isn't always easy. We are grateful to everyone who comes to the Day Centre, in whatever capacity, as this is what makes the Day Centre feel homely, safe, comfortable and joyful. Attenders and carers are also confident enough to enjoy outings, as they have grown to trust and feel comfortable with us.**

**Thanks too, to all the attenders and carers for their willingness to put their trust in us and to contribute in so many ways to the life of the organisation.**

## **Goodbye and thanks to Liam.**

**We first got to know Liam many years ago when he designed our website for us. He skilfully managed to capture the spirit of the organisation and design a site which was appealing and useful. He continued to maintain the site and has helped out with a variety of technical issues from time to time over several years.**

**Liam was appointed and took up the difficult task of managing the administrative side of the service late in 2024. He was an enthusiastic, calm and patient addition to the staff team. Sadly, his contract was only short and we said goodbye to him in the summer. His skill, good humour and willingness to learn and contribute were very much appreciated, and we are benefitting from several innovations that he made. His attitude of “If I can help with anything, give it to me, and I will have a go” was a delight and he is missed.**

**Many thanks, Liam, for being part of the team and for your valuable contribution to the service.**

## **Work with Carers**

**As you have read, carers are central to our work with our Day Centre attenders, and we get to know each of our clients’ family and wider circle of informal carers as a part of our support for the people who attend the Day Centre.**

**We also continue to support carers through our Carers’ Groups, which are valued by carers for their opportunity to meet with others who share concerns, worries, ideas, solutions and above all, friendship. Many thanks to Lynsey and Rachel, and to all the staff, for making it possible for these groups to take place and especially to all the carers for their contributions to the group.**

**We are also grateful to all who work behind the scenes to ensure that the transport is provided on three days a week for all the attenders, that the budget is balanced and extra grants are applied for when needed, to ensure that supplies are bought for the Day Centre so that refreshments are provided and alternative diets can be catered for, to ensure everyone is comfortable in what they are doing, and to support each other in our work.**

**We are proud to present this report. Thank you for reading it, and we hope you have enjoyed it.**

**Below are lists of people who have helped us over the past year. We hope we have included everyone. We are enormously thankful for all your contributions.**

**We are so grateful to everyone who has worked with us over the year. Here is the list of all volunteers and students who have supported us.**

**Volunteers:**

**Linda  
Courtney  
Rehana  
Kashaf  
Tabassum  
Kirsty  
Areshba  
Lorna  
Katie  
Nikola  
Laura  
Ore  
Roanna  
Leah  
Sam  
Jenny  
James**

**Students:**

**Leshaye  
Kirsty  
Jessica  
Hayder**

**Students continued:**

**Wajeha  
Nikola  
Kelly  
Manuella  
Angel  
Hafsat  
Ole  
Izzy  
Ifra  
Mehkan  
Lily  
James  
Tanisha  
Fatima  
Bethany  
Shelby  
Sata**

**Many, many thanks to all of these people for everything they have contributed.**

## **Funders in 2024/25**

- **Sheffield City Council, through our contract with them**
- **National Association for Social Prescribing**
- **Zachary Merton & George Woofinden Convalescent Trust**
- **Westfield Health**
- **Barchester Healthcare**
- **Freshgate Trust**
- **Synergy Microgrants**
- **South Yorkshire Community Fund**
- **Company of Cutlers in Hallamshire**
- **Sheffield Town Trust**
- **JG Graves Charitable Trust**
- **Harry Bottom Charitable Trust**

## **Donations in 2024/25**

- **Shillitto family in memory of Michael**
- **Margaret & David Hardy**
- **Merrill family**
- **Michael Button**
- **Nigel & Pat Worthington**
- **Facey Family Foundation**
- **Batty family**
- **Cook family**
- **Clixby family**

**Many thanks to all our funders and donors. These additional contributions to our funds mean that we can pay for activities which we could not otherwise afford. They are vital to us in maintaining the high quality of the care we provide on a daily basis.**

For a full Financial Report, you can look at our Trustees' Annual Report to the Charity Commission, available on the Charity Commission website, Charity No 1148094

## **Our Heartfelt Thanks to all these people:**

- **All the Attenders and Carers**
- **All the Staff: Lynsey Button, Michael Johnson, Liam Pettinger, Peter Bemba, Fiona Allinson, Rachel Gozzard, Moira Cartwright, Marwa Shakeri, Rehana Akhtar, for their commitment, resilience and continued hard work, maintaining and developing the service.**
- **All the Volunteers for their creativity and many varied contributions and support for the work that we do- we couldn't do it without you.**
- **The Trustees: Kevan Taylor (Chair), Jo Saul (Treasurer), Lisa Heller (Secretary), Linda Woollen, and Hazel Wood.**
- **Staff Support: Kevan Taylor, Lisa Heller.**
- **All our donors and grant makers, who are listed here.**
- **St. Albans Church, Gina, Kinder and Janet.**
- **Manor Community Transport**
- **Lightwood House kitchens for hot meals**
- **Andrea Small and other musicians for musical entertainment and activity.**
- **Wild Science for an entertaining and inspiring visit**
- **Sheffield Museums for their welcome.**
- **Sheffield City Council Contracts and Commissioning Department**
- **Seven Hills Accountants: Sue Cochrane and Sarah Lightfoot for examination of accounts and support in preparing reports.**
- **Voluntary Action Sheffield for our official address**
- **All our many friends and visitors for your continued friendship and support.**



## **Darnall Dementia Trust Contact Details:**

**Our Office Address is:**

**Darnall Dementia Trust,**

**The Circle, 33, Rockingham Lane, Sheffield S1 4FW**

*(This is a postal address only, there is no office there).*

**Email: [darnalldementia@yahoo.com](mailto:darnalldementia@yahoo.com)**

**To contact the Day Centre by phone:**

**Lynsey Button: 07397 158460**

**Darnall Dementia Group is part of Darnall Dementia Trust,  
a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee**

**Company Number: 08066719**

**Charity Number: 1148094**