

December 2023/January 2024

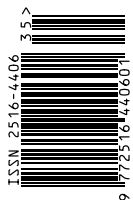
Dementia together



Alzheimer's
Society

In this issue

Changing routines,
new technologies,
'This is me', gift ideas,
doing everything you can
and much more



Welcome



Welcome to our last magazine of 2023 – and what a year it's been! Without a doubt, working with our amazing guest panel to co-produce the special August/September issue was the absolute highlight for us on the magazine team.

The results of the readership survey that went out with that issue (see p13) underline how valuable it is for us to find new ways to involve people with lived experience. We'll carry on developing the magazine in light of what you told us, and we'll also be identifying more ways to involve people in future.

As ever, we continue to benefit from your ideas and feedback, so do let us know what you think using our magazine contact details below. And in the meantime, happy new year!

Danny Ratnaike, Magazine Editor



**Need support? Call 0333 150 3456
or visit alzheimers.org.uk/getsupport**

Dementia together is the magazine for all Alzheimer's Society supporters and anyone affected by dementia. Contact us on **magazine@alzheimers.org.uk**, **020 7264 2667** or **020 7423 3676**, or write to us at Magazine Editor, Alzheimer's Society, Suite 2, 1st Floor East Wing, Plumer House, Tailour Road, Plymouth PL6 5FS.

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Contents



4 News

8 Making your own

12 Share and inspire

14 177 miles with my GPS

15 Opinion: Face to face with MPs

16 Driving advice



17 Are you a campaigner?

18 Research: Tech for better living

19 Research: Music, meaning and memory

20 Book group: One Last Thing

22 Getting to know you

24 Loan shark protection

26 Consumer panel: Gift ideas



28 Tennis galore

29 More than martial

30 Hand on heart

34 Consent for surgery

35 'Host mode'

36 Noticeboard



38 Puzzles and competitions





Directions

Too many people still don't know that Alzheimer's Society is here for them or that dementia is the UK's biggest killer.

Here at Team Alzheimer's, we're doing everything we can to change that. High-profile campaigns across the year will keep dementia and the Society within everyone's sights.

Our 12 Days of Christmas appeal will also make sure everyone knows how they can help us to be there for people living with dementia. And with chances to take part in a special raffle and to get crafting, everyone's a winner!

We're already planning an exciting and impactful 2024, and we won't let up calling on decision-makers at all levels – national and local – to make dementia a priority. The social care system needs to be fixed, and an early, accurate diagnosis needs to be a reality for everyone who develops dementia. How else will people be able to benefit from new treatments as they become available?

In the meantime, you all have our warmest wishes for the season, whether you're celebrating Christmas, Chanukah or another festival. It's your donations, fundraising, volunteering and campaigning that makes any of our work possible – thank you!

Kate Lee
Chief Executive Officer
[@KateLeeCEO](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/people/kate-lee)

News

Action plan for better diagnosis

The latest report from the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Dementia includes an action plan to end the postcode lottery of dementia diagnosis rates.

The APPG report, Raising the barriers, draws on 2,300 responses from people affected by dementia to show how widely diagnosis rates vary across the country.

The report also highlights how diagnosis rates declined during the pandemic and they have not recovered since. It makes eight recommendations to government, NHS England and local integrated care systems to make sure that people can get a timely and accurate diagnosis, regardless of where they live.

Find out more about the APPG, including this latest report, at alzheimers.org.uk/appg



12 Days of Christmas

Our 12 Days of Christmas appeal is helping to make sure the Dementia support line is there for everyone who needs it. Last year, calls increased by over 60% after Christmas – from concerned family and friends as well as people with dementia who found the festive noise and hubbub confusing or overwhelming.

Visit alzheimers.org.uk/Christmas or call **0330 333 0804** to donate, and enter the 12 Days of Christmas Raffle at alzheimers.org.uk/raffle by the end of 22 December for a chance to win £12,000!

12 Crafts of Christmas

We've teamed up with 12 amazing supporters who have created handy guides and inspirational content for you to download for free when you join our Christmas craft challenge. Learn a new skill, make your own Christmas cards, design baubles or finish knitting that perfect gift.

Find out more and join the challenge at alzheimers.org.uk/christmas-crafts



Your voice at party conferences

Over 7,300 of you contacted your MP asking them to speak with us at party conferences this autumn, and many of the 170 elected politicians we met said that's what prompted them to visit our stands – thank you!

We attended Conservative, Labour, Plaid Cymru and DUP conferences with the theme 'Make dementia a priority'. Visitors to our stands learned about key issues facing people living with dementia and spoke to people with lived experience (see p15).

NI: Preparing for new drugs

Northern Ireland politicians, healthcare professionals and others met at Stormont in October to ensure people can access new dementia drugs once they become available. Lecanemab and donanemab could slow the progression of Alzheimer's for some people.

Ruth Barry, our National Influencing Manager for Northern Ireland, said, 'Whilst many practical challenges were raised across all stakeholders, the expertise and determination is there to build capacity, resources and pathways to deliver new treatments in a safe and equitable manner.'

Wales diagnosis data letter

The Welsh Government promised to release a timeline for publishing diagnosis data after we delivered an open letter to NHS Wales in September. With an estimated diagnosis rate of just 50%, Wales is the only UK nation to not currently have this data publicly available.

We were joined by campaigners John and Sarah as well as Luke Fletcher – one of the 26 Welsh MPs and MSs who signed our letter, at least one from every party in the Senedd.

Blood test challenge

In January, the £5 million Blood Biomarker Challenge will announce which research team will help us revolutionise how dementia is diagnosed.

Applications closed in November and an independent panel of international experts is reviewing them. The successful team will take on the challenge to identify a simple blood test within five years that can be implemented across the NHS.

Earlier and more accurate diagnosis gives more time to arrange support and care, take part in research, and access new treatments like lecanemab and donanemab once they're available.

Getting an accurate diagnosis takes far too long – on average, people wait a year to see a clinician. For people with young-onset dementia, this can take as long as four years.

Tests such as brain scans and lumbar punctures are time-consuming and uncomfortable, and they're easier to get in some parts of the UK than others.

Fiona Carragher, our Director of Research and Influencing, said, 'New drugs targeting early-stage Alzheimer's disease are just around the corner. But without a diagnosis, people simply won't be able to access them if they are approved.'

'This could absolutely revolutionise the way dementia is diagnosed.'

We've partnered with Alzheimer's Research UK and the National Institute for Health and Care Research on the challenge, generously supported by players of the People's Postcode Lottery.



Sustainable sportswear



Our branded sportswear is now made from recycled polyester – one step in our commitment to halve our carbon emissions by 2030 and become net zero by 2045.

We're working on better solutions for the future, but our new sportswear will reduce plastic waste, carbon emissions and water use in the meantime.

You can help further by reusing Alzheimer's Society gear when exercising and for future challenges – and raise awareness at the same time! **For branded merchandise and much more, visit shop.alzheimers.org.uk or call 0333 366 0035.**

Compass elves

Compass One Retail, which provides retail outlets in hospitals, is supporting us once again through its annual Elf Week. From 6–15 December, Compass teams across the UK will dress up as elves to raise money and awareness. Our thanks go to all Compass colleagues and customers for their support!

Join in the fun on Elf Day, 6 December – please visit alzheimers.org.uk/elf-day or call 0330 333 0804.

Early career researcher retreat

Society-funded researchers at the earliest stages of their careers took part in a retreat this summer. It's just one of the ways we support the next generation so they can thrive in their fields of dementia research.

Our Early Career Researcher Retreat 2023 took place over two days in Newcastle, offering the kind of networking that makes all the difference to researchers at this stage. They took part in sessions on subjects such as becoming a leader in academia and presenting research effectively.

Fiona Carragher, Director of Research and Influencing, said, 'Investment in early career researchers is investment in the future. Without researchers we cannot grasp the life-changing breakthroughs we need to end the devastation of dementia.'

We've continued to develop how we support early career researchers, based on what they've told us they value most. We're one of the only funders to cover family and sick leave for PhD students, and we're helping people get back into research after a break of two years or more.

Find out more about our research programme at alzheimers.org.uk/research



Over £3 million from Memory Walk

We turned parks and city centres blue at Memory Walks in Wales, England and Northern Ireland during September and October. Nearly 29,000 people took part, raising over £3 million between them. Next year's Memory Walk will be even bigger and better – we can't wait!

Register your interest in Memory Walk 2024 at alzheimers.org.uk/memory-walk or call 0300 330 5452.



A trek to remember



Sign-ups for next summer's Trek26 events are now open, so grab your hiking boots and get ready for your greatest challenge yet. Experience a breath of fresh air and breathtaking views on a 26- or 13-mile trek, and raise funds for vital support and research at the same time.

See alzheimers.org.uk/trek26 to find your trek and use the code **TOGETHER** by 31 January for 20% off your place, or call 0330 222 5808 for more information.

2024 conference

The next Alzheimer's Society Annual Conference will be held on 14 May, during Dementia Action Week 2024. You can attend virtually or in person at etc.venues, 155 Bishopsgate, London. The event will bring together professionals, decision-makers and people with lived experience to make dementia a priority.

Register at alzheimers.org.uk/conference to be the first to hear about tickets and speakers.

Welsh language use award



Alzheimer's Society Cymru won Best use of Welsh language award at the Welsh Charity Awards 2023.

The award recognised our work in assisting Welsh-speaking Dementia support line callers, funding Welsh speakers to travel to areas without fluent staff to help provide support, and improving our translated information.

Volunteer to make an impact

We're celebrating our dedicated volunteers and their contributions this International Volunteer Day, 5 December. Our volunteers provide help and hope for people affected by dementia in a range of roles, at groups, through Companion Calls or supporting people with lasting power of attorney forms and NHS Continuing Healthcare appeals.

To make a difference today – visit alzheimers.org.uk/volunteer or call 0330 333 0804.

Honour a loved one

You can honour the memory of a loved one by setting up an online Tribute Fund in aid of the Society.

A Tribute Fund webpage can be personalised with photos, music and videos, celebrating the person's life for years to come. People visiting the page can make donations, light candles, leave messages, add their own photos and leave virtual gifts.

Visit alzheimers.org.uk/inmemory or call 0330 333 0804 to find out more.

Don't miss...

What can help with driving after a diagnosis, including when you have to stop? [See p16.](#)

Join our amazing community of campaigners and help make dementia a priority. [See p17.](#)

The updated 'This is me' is helping more people to get personalised care. [See p22.](#)

What did people with dementia in Norwich think of gift ideas from our shop? [See p26.](#)

Readers share advice about 'host mode' making a person's symptoms less obvious. [See p35.](#)



Making your own

Anne Hoad has posterior cortical atrophy, a rarer form of dementia. Jessica Hubbard speaks to Anne and her husband Tony about how their life has changed.

Quick read

Anne Hoad, in Kent, has a rarer type of dementia called posterior cortical atrophy (PCA).

Signs of Anne's PCA were initially missed, but she and her husband returned to the GP after speaking to friends.

Anne had a varied career, and when she started to struggle to put sentences together, family and friends knew something was wrong.

She now helps to support others and to educate the next generation of healthcare professionals.

‘We have to make our own, don't we?’ says Anne Hoad.

Anne's sitting in front of a large window to her garden – one she used to enjoy spending many hours tending. She lives with Tony, her husband of 50 years, and their springer spaniel.

While life has certainly changed since Anne's diagnosis with a rarer form of dementia, they're determined to maintain as normal a life as possible.

Fond memories

Anne remembers a closeknit family life in East London with her nine siblings. Her family wasn't well off, but she has fond memories.

‘We lived in a small house,’ Anne says, ‘but we were very happy. I remember Mum running around telling us off. We were all very close.’

Anne worked as a nurse at a large London hospital, following in the footsteps of family members who had also worked in healthcare.

‘When I was at school, I wanted to be a nurse,’ she says, ‘and when I left at 16, that's what I did.’

Anne was once recognised as Nurse of the Year.

‘I had so much in me to give,’ she says. ‘I didn't expect to get Nurse of the Year, but I loved my job and colleagues.’

‘She was a natural,’ says Tony, ‘especially around children. It was like her calling.’

Life together

Anne met Tony at a party in 1971, and she says, ‘I remember he tried to impress me!’

‘I got the invite along with some male friends,’ says Tony, ‘and we went to meet all the nurses.’

‘Anne stood out because the party was for her. I offered to help with some of the drinks because she seemed to need help.’

‘We continued to go out regularly, and a year later to the day we were married!’



They had three children, and Anne became a nursery nurse. She later worked as a senior youth leader, supporting children and young adults.

'She enjoyed helping young people,' Tony says.

'And telling them off!' adds Anne.

Cutbacks meant that Anne had to leave this job, but her gardening hobby made working at a garden centre a natural next step.

'It was loads of fun,' she says.

While there, Anne was also offered a more unusual job. A tailor friend had a royal warrant to make buttons for the then Prince Charles. Anne helped mount and engrave the buttons for around 10 years.

'I enjoyed doing it and it was from home, so didn't really get in the way of anything else,' she says.

Not quite right

Anne and Tony moved to Deal, in Kent, a few years ago. This was partly due to Anne feeling unsettled and because they have family in the area.

Tony says, 'Anne had been on holiday earlier and the person she was with turned to me and said, "Your Anne isn't quite right..."'

Despite the change of scenery, Anne was experiencing problems like low mood and difficulties in reading and writing. Her GP prescribed Anne antidepressants.

“

The person she was with turned to me and said, 'Your Anne isn't quite right...'”

By talking to others and observing Anne's difficulties, Tony realised her symptoms might not be depression.

'I didn't appreciate it at the time – I just thought some of the symptoms were old age or Anne being contrary.'

PCA diagnosis

Tony asked the GP to reassess Anne's condition. She was referred for memory and thinking tests. Around a year after originally going to the doctor, she was diagnosed with posterior cortical atrophy (PCA).

People with PCA can experience problems with vision, recognising faces and objects, literacy and numeracy. They can later go on to develop symptoms more typical of Alzheimer's, like memory loss and confusion.

'We are in no shape or form criticising our GP for not picking it up,' Tony says. 'I quite understand that. They are incredibly supportive and have been there for us ever since.'

Changing routines

'I can't put it into words,' Anne says when asked about her symptoms. Her condition affects the part of the brain that interprets visual information from the eyes, making everyday tasks and activities difficult or impossible.

Anne used to take care of the housework but now finds using things like the washing machine and taps difficult. Going out to eat must be planned because Anne finds it easier to eat with her hands. She can no longer read books or write letters and cards, which she used to enjoy.

'It's turned our lives upside-down really,' says Tony. 'Our roles have changed. When it came to things like washing and housework, she was doing it all. I find it challenging.'

Tony also explains how the condition affected Anne's hobby.

'It's a perception of where things are. So, if Anne's trying to trim a tree or pick some flowers, where she thinks the flowers are is not where they are.'

'But Anne still loves the garden even if she can't do the gardening. On a sunny day we'll sit on the patio and enjoy the garden with our dog.'

Positive outlook

Anne says that remaining positive has helped her to cope.

'I think we've come through quite a lot of things going on, but I'm quite



happy,' she says. 'I mean, I don't really think, "Oh poor me."

'I find that now I've got my head around it, I'll kind of talk to myself and say, "Sod it!" You can't, sort of, dwell. You make your own, don't you?'

Socialising and keeping in touch are important to Anne. She calls her daughter, who lives in Los Angeles, every day via FaceTime. Her two sons also visit regularly from London.

'It's very good for me when they come, and they're very helpful,' she says. 'You've got to have nice people around you.'

'She remains positive mostly,' says Tony, 'though she does of course have moments where she wishes it would all go away.'

'I'm conscious that PCA is a progressive condition, but I'm hopeful we can maintain a normal life for as long as possible.'

Supporting others

Anne attends community groups with Tony, and she's keen to provide peer support.

'There's a lot of people out there that have this and think, "Oh God, what do I do now?"' she says.

'It's hard when you get to the stage I'm at. If we can help anyone really, it's a good thing.'

'We try and get involved with the community – groups for pensioners and people with dementia,' Tony says.

'As a result of that, we meet other people in similar situations.

'We try to see and support people whose husband or wife has got this condition and they're just devastated by it. Anything we can do to support other people is worth doing.'

Anne and Tony are also helping to educate the next generation of healthcare professionals. They take part in the Society's Time for Dementia programme, which pairs people affected by dementia with students.

'When we went to the GP, they didn't recognise the symptoms – and I was guilty of it too,' Tony says. 'People have an awareness of Anne's condition, but I don't think they're aware of PCA as a type of dementia and how it affects people. We felt that if we could tell them what to watch out for, it may be better in the future.'

For more about the Time for Dementia programme, see alzheimers.org.uk/timefordementia or call **07562 430204**.

For personalised information and advice, please call our Dementia support line on **0333 150 3456**, or for Welsh speakers call **03300 947 400**.



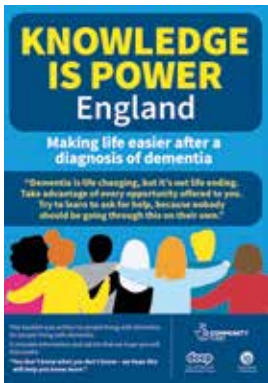
Donate

Donations like yours are vital to ensure research into the effects of dementia on the brain can continue. [Donate online](#)

Share and inspire

Views, updates and ideas – for and by you.

Knowledge is Power



People living with dementia have created another guide in a series aiming to help make life easier for others after a diagnosis.

Knowledge is Power England addresses myths and shares advice on a range of issues, from benefits and travel to planning for the future.

Maxine Linnell, one of the guide's editors, said, 'Our aim is to make dementia less scary, give you hope and information. With the information at your fingertips, we hope you will see we can still live our lives with dementia. Here is all the stuff we wish we had known about – all in one place.'

The latest booklet joins guides for Wales (in Welsh and English versions) and Scotland (in Scottish Gaelic and English), all produced by people with dementia and DEEP (the Dementia Engagement and Empowerment Project).

See www.dementiavoices.org.uk/deep-resources and click 'Resources by DEEP groups' or email KiP@myid.org.uk

Taking Europe by storm

The European Working Group of People with Dementia received a standing ovation at this year's Alzheimer's Europe conference.

Working group members, including Chair Chris Roberts and Nigel Hullah, both from Wales, spoke to over 1,100 delegates from 48 countries in Helsinki in October. They shared the various ways they're transforming personal experiences into political advocacy and involvement in dementia research.

Another highlight came from LGBTQ+ community members, including people involved in our work through Dementia Voice. Dáithí Cee and Patrick Ettenes spoke about experiences of dementia for non-binary people and for queer people of colour, and Jon Hammond looked at approaches to support LGBTQ+ people living with dementia.

12 years of song in Truro

Cornwall's Truro Singing for the Brain group celebrated its 12th birthday recently – a fantastic milestone for everyone involved! Local Services Manager Teresa Parsons underlined how vital volunteers have been for people with dementia to share music and joy through the group.

'Some of our incredible volunteers who support the group have been with us since day one 12 years ago,' she said, 'so it was a celebration for them too. We simply couldn't run the sessions without them!'

Visit alzheimers.org.uk/singingforthebrain to find a Singing for the Brain group near you, or call 0333 150 3456.



Knitted joy

Joan Smith in Staffordshire, who was diagnosed with dementia in 2016, creates these wonderful knitted dolls without using any patterns (sent in by her husband Alan).





What did you think about our special August/September issue?

594 took part in our survey

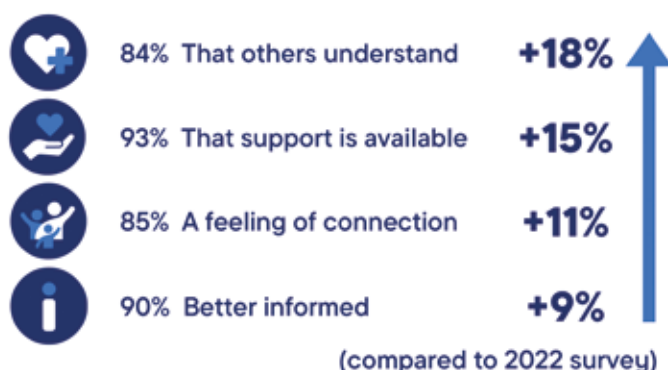


How did you rate this issue?

- 53% 'Excellent'
- 43% 'Good'
- 4% 'Average'
- 0% 'Poor'
- 0% 'Very poor'

(90% had read previous magazines)

How did this issue make you feel?



What were your favourite articles?

How to talk to me

Creative showcase

Latest innovations

Benefits - what you need to know

Still out there

The beauty of flies

Gerry's cartoons: 'Spot on!'

96%

Would like to read another special issue

Readership survey

Thank you to the nearly 600 readers who completed the survey about our special August/September issue, which was co-produced with a panel of people affected by dementia.

Almost all (96%) of respondents rated the issue as 'excellent' or 'good'. More than in our 2022 survey said the special issue made them feel that others understood what they're going through (84%, up 18%), that support is available (93%, up 15%) and better informed about dementia (90%, up 9%). You particularly enjoyed articles that were the direct result of the guest panel's new ideas, including 'How to talk to me' and 'Latest innovations'.

We'll continue to use the findings to improve the magazine, and we'll plan further ways to involve people too – watch this space!

Time for a puzzle?

See p38 for another 'anagramword' from Pete Middleton, plus a 'crystals' word game from November's Brain Workout puzzle pack.



Share your views, feedback and news – email magazine@alzheimers.org.uk or write to the address on p2. We can consider contributions received by 5 January for the February/March issue (wording may be edited).

177 miles with my GPS

Jane Buckels, in Abergavenny, tells us how she walked Offa's Dyke Path alone, despite the challenges posed by her dementia.



I recently spent 12 days walking Offa's Dyke Path – an achievement in itself, but not the main achievement for me. I have early-onset Alzheimer's, which affects my short-term memory, planning ability and decision making. I get lost a lot.

I'm fitter than the average 66-year-old, so I was able to cope with the distance, but I wanted to walk it alone! I attempted Offa's Dyke in 1982 but was encouraged by my daughter Emma to try again.

What if?

Planning the trip and navigation were hurdles for me, but a group walk along part of the route convinced me it might be possible.

A friend told me about companies that organise B&Bs and transport baggage along the route. I took the

plunge and booked. Then I panicked – what if this, what if that?

I put everything on a spreadsheet, so it was in one place. Obvious, but it took me a few days to come up with the idea and a few more to dredge my brain for the workings of Excel, which I used all the time at work.

I became confident using the OS Maps app, though still with map and compass! I also got a power bank, but the first time I took it with me, I forgot to use it. I started putting it with my lunch as a visual reminder.

I booked my rail ticket home as well as passenger assistance because I get confused in railway stations – especially with a change at Birmingham.

GPS device

My luck was also in because Alzheimer's Society wanted people to test a GPS location device, designed for people with more advanced dementia.

This meant that if something untoward did happen, I could be located. This gave me confidence, but also Emma and my partner Brin. Brin shuttled me around for a few days and then I rang him at the beginning and end of every day.

I normally live by routine and arriving at an unfamiliar B&B and trying to find a place to eat was very stressful. But I got into a new routine.

Accepting blips

I wandered off route a few times after walking through gates and immediately forgetting which way the arrow was pointing, being absorbed by the view, or thinking about lunch. But the phone sorted me out.

I came to accept these blips and stopped beating myself up about them.

I can't describe how much I enjoyed the journey.

I loved Llangollen and the Pontcysyllte aqueduct and I'd never heard of the Clwydian Range. I also met some lovely fellow walkers along the path.

Now I know I can walk 177 miles on my own, even if I can't navigate Birmingham New Street station!

For our Keeping active and involved (1506) booklet, visit alzheimers.org.uk/publications or call 0300 303 5933.

Opinion: Face to face with MPs

Michelle Nelson-Greensmith says more MPs need to hear about the realities of dementia. She was at our Labour conference stand this year to tell them in person.

When I heard about going to party conferences and speaking to MPs, I thought, 'Oh, that sounds really interesting!'

You don't get these opportunities to speak to the people that run the country and have influence. They need to know how dementia affects people. I'm glad I did it – I loved every single minute of it.

Constituent power

Getting people to invite their MPs to come and talk to us was brilliant – it worked to a tee. So many MPs came saying, 'My constituents emailed me and said I need to visit this stand.'

We got them to play a maze game with a ball bearing, but we made them do it with one hand to represent the challenges so many people have navigating the diagnosis system. We timed them and had a leaderboard, so all these MPs were competing against each other. That was brilliant as well because more people came to have a look.

Need to know

What did I tell them about being diagnosed? That in just 10 minutes they'd stopped me driving, I'd lost my job and been diagnosed with dementia. For another 11 years, you'd have had my tax and national insurance. I don't know what's going to happen, what my future is as I get worse.

When I was diagnosed, the doctor gave me four years left to live and said he'd call the police if I got back in my car to drive home. He let me go crying, I was in floods of tears.

When I told the MPs this, they were dumfounded. They were just looking at me as though, 'Does this actually go on?'

They need to know these things. It's not just that you've been diagnosed with dementia, it's a domino effect – everything starts to fall down.

My husband had to sell the house to pay off bills because we'd lost my income. We had to relocate, so he had to give up work. They don't think about the things that happen when you get a diagnosis when you're young. And benefits don't come anywhere near what you can earn when you're working.

Hitting a nerve

I don't think dementia has had the recognition that it needed. People just say, 'Oh, I didn't realise it was so big, we didn't realise it was the biggest killer.' That's because it's not talked about. The government's always playing catch-up now because they've let it go too far.

It felt very important that MPs were hearing about people's experiences in person – a lot more important than I thought it was going to be.

I'm hoping that I've hit a nerve with them – that they'll go back and I keep popping in their heads. I hope that every time they hear the word 'dementia' they think, 'Oh I remember speaking to Michelle.'



You can get involved too

Help us challenge and change the issues faced by people affected by dementia – visit alzheimers.org.uk/campaign

Driving advice

Tips about driving after a diagnosis – and stopping – from readers, Dementia Voice partners and Dementia Support Forum members.



People with first-hand experience help shape our work through Dementia Voice – visit alzheimers.org.uk/involvement to find out more.

Dementia Support Forum is free and open 24/7 – see forum.alzheimers.org.uk

Safe driving uses many complex skills that we often don't have to think about. Even if driving feels like second nature to you, dementia will eventually affect these skills and make driving unsafe.

After diagnosis

Being diagnosed with dementia doesn't automatically mean you have to stop driving. Many people can continue to drive with regular checks.

However, you must tell your licensing agency (DVLA or DVA) and car insurer straightaway.

Driving safely

If the DVLA or DVA says you can still drive, then keep things simple.

Choose times and routes that avoid stress or tricky conditions. Drive without distractions, such as the radio.

Getting ready

It can help to plan ahead for when you do need to stop driving.

Talk to others about how this will feel and what might help. Perhaps try out different travel arrangements for when the time comes.

Deciding to stop for yourself is much easier to deal with than being told you can no longer drive.

Stopping

When you do stop, try to still get out and about using other transport.

It can be hard to adapt if driving's been an important part of your life and independence. Yet some people also enjoy more exercise, less stress and money saved.

Your tips

'I try not to drive on bad days. Having someone with you also helps. Keep to speed limits, no matter if the wally behind can't drive safe. The sat-nav nowadays shows you what's ahead and may divert you away from traffic accidents and closures.'

Stephen Copley

'Stay driving local with someone else. Then there's the speed some people drive at behind you. My way of coping with that is to tap the brakes. Filling out the form for DVLA can be a bit of a pain if you're not used doing it, or get someone else who is.'

Geoff

'I handed back my licence to DVLA. Now, when I have the opportunity to go in a car, I always choose a rear seat and have not regretted my decision for a single minute. We all have a duty to drive in a manner whereby we will make the roads as safe a place as possible.'

Roy C

'I was happy to stop because I didn't feel I was driving as well as I used to. I had already had to take a driving test to be allowed to continue a year previously but felt I had enough. And if you don't run a car, you can afford the odd cab.'

Sue in London

'Before my husband was diagnosed, we noticed he kept forgetting to change gear and also either drove too slow or too fast. Eventually, when he couldn't remember which way to drive home, he realised he wasn't happy driving, so told me to drive in future, which was a huge relief.'

Sheila from the Wirral

For our Driving (1504) booklet, visit alzheimers.org.uk/publications or call 0300 303 5933.

Are you a campaigner?

You can help to make dementia a priority, whether by signing a petition, contacting your MP or more.

We campaign at local and national levels to make dementia a priority, and we couldn't do this without our brilliant campaigners.

Anyone can be a campaigner – whether you want a reformed social care system or more funding for dementia research. All it takes is passion.

Not sure where to start? Here are just some of the ways you could help:

Contact your MP

MPs have the influence to make real change – so do all the other people elected to represent you at various levels.

Writing to your elected representatives is a good way to get dementia on the agenda and keep it there. If you can meet them in person to encourage them to make dementia a priority, even better.

Add your name

Petitions and open letters are effective ways to call on governments and other organisations to act.

They show strength of feeling about an issue, especially when supported by thousands of people. The names all add up, so adding yours counts!

Your story has power

Sharing your experiences is a powerful way to convince people about what needs to change.

We share many opportunities to do this with our campaigners, whether by contributing to evidence or speaking with decision-makers directly.

Why campaign?

Versha Patel, whose late mum Sitaben had vascular dementia, says, 'Whilst caring for my mum, the word "dementia" was like an outcast within our Indian community.

'With a lack of understanding, I felt the stigma would continue to grow. This is where my campaign journey started.'

Eamonn Dobbyn, who shared his experience of young-onset dementia in the House of Commons last spring, says, 'Many people don't understand that dementia is a terminal illness, the government fails to acknowledge this as well.

'Help for people after they are diagnosed is lacking, it needs to be stepped up. Personally, I felt like I had been written off.

'There is no face of dementia, it is a silent and invisible illness. It is about making people understand that. This is why I've put myself forward to research and campaign with Alzheimer's Society.'

Paul Kemp and his wife Sandra delivered an open letter calling on the health secretary to make dementia a priority.

'I campaign because of the length of time it took to get a diagnosis for Sandra, to find out that the only treatment available is three tablets,' says Paul.

'This is when I discovered Alzheimer's Society and their commitment to better diagnosis and new and better treatments.

'This disease waits for nothing and no one, and Alzheimer's Society's actions speak louder than any other words that I've heard.'



Paul and Sandra (second and third from left) delivering the open letter.

Become a campaigner

Visit [alzheimers.org.uk/campaign](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/campaign) to join our 85,000-strong community of campaigners.

Research: Tech for better living

New technology can help people with dementia to remain independent for longer, but researchers need volunteers to help develop it.

‘Go for it – my life has been enriched.’

That’s what Barbara Woodward-Carlton has to say to anyone thinking of taking part in dementia research.

She first volunteered after caring for her late mother, who had Alzheimer’s. Barbara was then diagnosed with vascular dementia herself two years ago.

When the opportunity came up to take part in research into new technology to help people living with dementia, Barbara says, ‘I had no hesitation in saying yes.’

Independent longer

Although technology can’t replace care and support from human beings, it can help people with dementia to remain independent for longer. It may also help specialists to focus their time on where their expertise and judgement is needed most.

Professor Ramin Nilforooshan at the University of Surrey leads on the Minder study at the UK Dementia Research Institute. They’re developing a system to monitor people’s wellbeing remotely.

He says, ‘I hope that the work we do will give us ideas to find a combination of devices, technology and a new model of service that could help people have better care at home for a longer period of time.’

The Minder system aims to use a personalised range of devices in a person’s home. Professionals can monitor information from these and provide help if necessary.

Devices can measure blood pressure, temperature, heartrate and weight, or sense movement. Bed mats monitor night-time sleep, heartrate and breathing, which may identify an infection.

‘For example, sensors on the door could produce an alert if the door opens in the middle of the night,’ says Professor Nilforooshan. ‘If this is out of character for you, the monitoring team can liaise with a family member or clinician.’

Better recall

Barbara volunteered to help research a therapy app called Gotcha! This was co-designed by people with dementia as well as game specialists to help improve recall of names in a fun way.

Photos of people who are important to you are added to the app, which you can then practise with. Successfully naming people gives you access to mini games.

Aygun Badalova, a Gotcha! researcher at UCL in London, says, ‘We ask participants to think of six to 10 familiar people whose names they forget and wish to remember better.

‘We suggest practising these names with the tablet for 30 minutes every day over a six-week period.’

Taking part in the Gotcha! study appealed to Jane Scarlett because she had problems remembering people’s names at work.

‘I think people would be surprised how technology can help instead of medication,’ she said.

‘This study has helped me tremendously and I can now put a name to a face. We don’t hear enough about other methods that could help.

‘I would recommend doing any studies that appeal to you. Researchers can only assist us or find answers to this disease with our help.’

Research needs you

Both Minder and Gotcha! researchers are looking for more

people to take part, as are other dementia technology studies.

Sharon Boulter, who works on our Join Dementia Research helpdesk, encourages people to get in touch to find out more.

‘Researchers need volunteers with different levels of ability and experience in using technology, to make it more accessible and easier for everyone to use,’ she says. ‘It may be as simple as giving a voice command or pressing a button.

‘Talk to us if you would like to find out more about what these types of studies involve. Don’t assume you can’t take part – researchers are there to support, and they want people to take part in their studies.’



Barbara Woodward-Carlton and Jane Scarlett.

Find out how you can get involved in all kinds of dementia research. Call 0333 150 3456 and ask for the Join Dementia Research helpdesk, or email joindementiaresearch@alzheimers.org.uk

Music, meaning and memory

A researcher in London has taken dementia research in new directions through South Asian music and dance.



As an old-age psychiatrist, Naaheed Mukadam was inspired to get into dementia research after seeing the complex ways in which the condition affected people's lives.

'I wanted to reduce stigma surrounding dementia, especially in minority ethnic communities,' she says, 'and to make a difference to people living with dementia.'

This summer, Naaheed, now Associate Professor at UCL in London, engaged South Asian communities more directly through an event featuring dance and music.

Public connection

Naaheed's Society-funded research into differences in dementia prevention, diagnosis and outcomes between ethnic communities has already been hugely valuable.

However, she wanted to involve community members in new ways to make her work even more meaningful.

'I wanted to widen the reach of my work, so that it was not just for academics and clinicians but also connecting with the general public.'

She'd seen many times from her clinical experience just how powerful music could be in helping people with dementia connect with others, even when other communication was difficult. There was also a lack of research in South Asian communities looking at how memory and music are related.

Music and movement

Naaheed decided to develop a special event by involving people affected by dementia, a dancer and a musician who plays the sarod (a stringed instrument used in North Indian classical music).

'I worked with a dance artist, Jesal Patel, and sarod artist Soumik Datta to create the event. We met several times while planning the event to discuss memory problems and how dementia affects people.'

'We also conducted workshops together in a day centre and care home, speaking with people with dementia and carers about their experiences and connecting with them through music and movement.'

'We used these conversations and experiences to help shape the event.'

Great engagement

The event, called Music, Meaning and Memory, took place in London in June.

'After the event people affected by dementia told me they were very moved by what we had created and felt their experiences were captured accurately, which meant a lot to me,' says Naaheed.

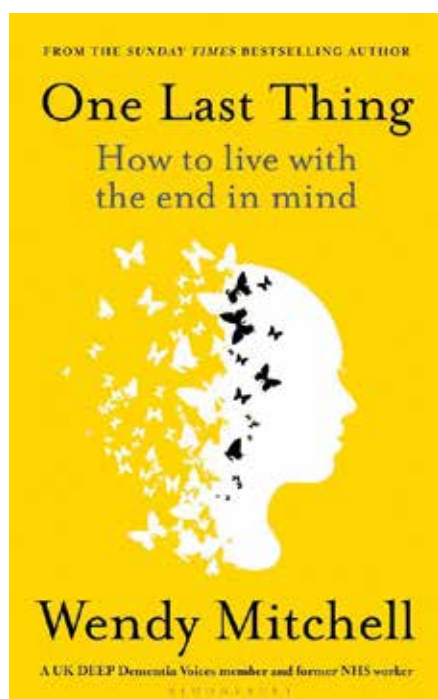
'The audience responded really well to the performance and there was great engagement with the Q&A. I felt euphoric for some time afterwards and really proud of the work we had made.'

'I hope the work helps to show the challenges of having dementia but also hope it helps people to feel less alone, reduces stigma and helps people to find sources of support.'

Book group: One Last Thing

We read a book that explores how we can prepare for, talk about and make our own choices about death.

Content warning: assisted dying and suicide



One Last Thing, by Wendy Mitchell (Bloomsbury 2023), 240 pages, £16.99 (prices vary), ISBN 9781526658753. Also available as an ebook.

Wendy Mitchell was diagnosed with vascular dementia and Alzheimer's in 2014, aged 58. She's written three books since then, and her third – *One Last Thing* – encourages conversations about death and end-of-life care.

Jane Buckels, who lives with Alzheimer's, says, 'One Last Thing made me confront what I've been putting off doing, but it did so in an informative way that wasn't judgmental or bossy.'

'I saw planning for the end as one big thing that had to be done all in one go, when actually one thing leads onto another. The book has indicated a path through the maze.'

'The overriding thing I've taken away from the book is that forward planning has to involve those that you will be relying on to implement your wishes and that you need to perhaps adjust some of your wishes to include loved ones.'

'I also take away the word "discussion" and will be giving the book to my daughter to read so that she too understands the importance of discussion and is involved in the process.'

Seeing things differently

Mitchell supports the legalisation of assisted dying but says her book doesn't try to convince others to agree with her. She argues that people should have choice over how and when they die.

Jennifer Bute, a former GP living with dementia, was disappointed by how much of the book focused on this.

'I had hoped *One Last Thing* would be far more positive about living one's remaining life to the full.'

'Wendy passionately argues the case for assisted dying. We all see things differently and everyone has the right to express opinions, and indeed we need to hear them.'

'I believe our true value and worth does not depend on the state of our physical bodies or brains or state of mind, and that assisted dying is a slippery slope that is not as clear-cut as this book makes out.'

Pete Middleton, who has Alzheimer's, had hoped for more of a practical guide about 'living with the end in mind'.

'There is useful information in this book,' he says, 'though I would personally prefer this in the form of a handbook or guide, rather than through stories and anecdotes.'

Compassion and sensitivity

Keith Oliver, a Society Ambassador with young-onset Alzheimer's, says, 'The book made me shed a tear, smile a little and think a lot. This is a book about more than dying – it is about life which, like dementia, has a beginning, a middle and an end.'

'In the case of life, it is the last stage that is seldom spoken about, and this book serves to generate attention and hopefully add to the discourse.'

'Wendy tackles end of life with compassion and sensitivity, and much of what she writes resonates with me. Like her, death holds no fear but the process of dying and being robbed of so much prior to death by dementia does scare me.'

‘Occasionally, the words of professionals within the book frustrated me in the same way they did Wendy.

‘I relate also to Wendy when she writes about cancer and other serious life-threatening conditions and how people are better supported to move to life’s exit.

‘Everyone with dementia will have a different journey but the terminus is always the same. Wendy articulates this complex issue in her unique, brave and thoughtful way without slipping into a morose abyss.

‘I recommend the book to people affected by dementia, to health and social care professionals, but also to anyone who finds this subject hard to come to terms with.’

Starting conversations

Anita Goundry has Alzheimer’s and vascular dementia.

‘I’ve been thinking about my death since I was 21,’ she says. ‘I had various types of cancer, three strokes and a heart attack.

‘This book would be brilliant for those that are frightened of having conversations about death. It’s done in a conversational style and, because of Wendy’s experiences, she knows what she’s talking about.

‘I am going to pass this book around my family, because they’ll understand so much more about the decisions that I have made.

‘It’s like a handbook and self-help book all in one. You will come across death, you will think about death. So, let’s talk about death.’

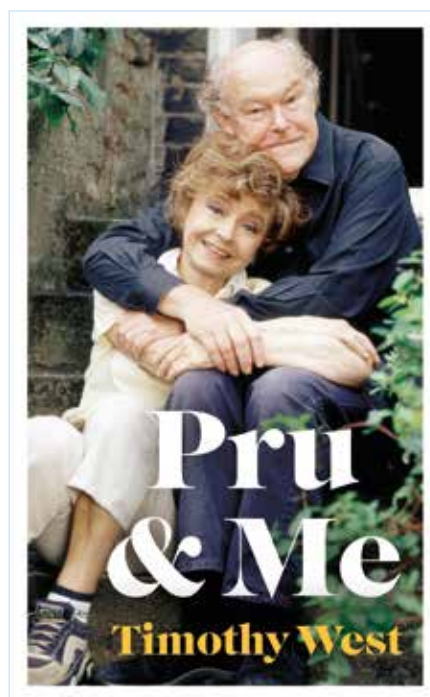
“

In the case of life, it is the last stage that is seldom spoken about, and this book serves to generate attention and hopefully add to the discourse.”

Your turn

For our next book group, we invite you to read *Pru and Me*, by Timothy West (Michael Joseph 2023), 352 pages, £22.00 (prices vary), ISBN 9780241629550. Also available as an ebook and audiobook.

Tell us what you think about this book about Timothy’s life with his wife Prunella Scales, including since she developed Alzheimer’s. Email magazine@alzheimers.org.uk or write to the address on p2 by the end of 5 January so we can share your comments in the February/ March magazine.



Book giveaway

We have three copies of *Pru and Me* to give away – email magazine@alzheimers.org.uk or write to the address on p2 by the end of 17 December quoting ‘Pru’ for a chance to win (see p39 for terms and conditions).

Getting to know you

What would you want people to know about you if you couldn't tell them? **Jessica Hubbard** finds out how 'This is me' can help to personalise care.

Quick read

'This is me' can be used to record details about a person who can't easily share information about themselves.

Paula Thomas says This is me has made a huge difference to her mother's care.

First developed in 2010, This is me was updated this year as a booklet with new sections.

More professionals need to make use of This is me, since it can be so valuable in improving care.

When Paula Thomas's mother, diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2019, eventually needed carers for support, she found a helpful tool called 'This is me'.

The simple leaflet, produced by Alzheimer's Society, is a record of a person's background, likes and dislikes for people who can't easily share this information themselves.

This is me can include details about the person's culture, family, life and routines. It's designed so that professionals can provide care that's person-centred – tailored to the person's interests, abilities, history and personality.

A huge difference

'When Mum finally had a needs assessment and carers were put in place, This is me was really useful for planning activities and social outings that she would enjoy,' explains Paula.

'I used This is me to tell them how much she likes animals, and her carers use this as a distraction technique to help her when she is particularly confused or anxious.

'I've also listed her favourite foods (she always had a very sweet tooth) and hobbies (she loves jigsaws).

'This is Me has made a huge difference, as it's something carers can refer back and add to.'

Building rapport

Britt Greenfield, Dementia Advisor at the Society, recalls how helpful This is me was during her time volunteering in hospital.

'Before my current job, I was a volunteer at the Royal United Hospital in Bath, visiting patients with dementia.

'Every known person with dementia had a This is me near their bed or in their top drawer.

'This was so valuable as I saw so many different people weekly, it was hard to remember their interests or backgrounds.

'This helped me to build a rapport quicker, as I knew more about the person.

'One gentleman was an engineer who worked on Concorde. I got him talking about this for ages and, as I knew nothing about it, he was happy to teach me, which brightened both our afternoons.'



Updated

Since it was created in 2010, This is me continues to grow in popularity and has been endorsed by the Royal College of Nursing.

Kathy De Mattia, Writer/Editor at the Society, says, 'We love how passionate people feel about This is me, and we receive a lot of positive feedback, as well as ideas to make it even better.'

'We reviewed This is me in 2023, involving people with dementia, their carers, family and friends, and professionals.'

'The response was incredible, and we were able to reshape the tool with all the new ideas.'

The updated This is me is a booklet that includes the person's preferred name and interests on the cover, with new sections for improved person-centred care.

Use it

This is me is widely used in hospitals but can be used in any setting, including at home or in a care home. Kathy wants more professionals to understand just how helpful it is and to use it.

Helen Saville, Dementia Advisor, recommended This is me to a couple she was supporting for the husband's two-week stay in a care home. The man has type 1 diabetes in addition to his dementia.

'The care home was aware of this and had agreed a plan of action with diabetes specialists prior to him entering the home,' Helen says. 'This is me was more of a backup, with extra hints and tips.'

'Unfortunately, the care home did not use the document, which had specific written instructions saying that when his blood sugars are checked at night, he may need a few biscuits to help him through.'

'So he did suffer a few night-time "hypo" incidents, but is home and fine now.'

This underlines how important it is for professionals to make use of This is me, and the difference it can make when they do.

'This is me can be invaluable in providing missing information at a time when loved ones are under stress,' says Helen. 'Things can be added as you think of them and before they are actually needed.'

Download This is me or order a free copy by post – visit alzheimers.org.uk/thisisme or call **0300 303 5933**.



For our Understanding and supporting a person with dementia (524) factsheet, see alzheimers.org.uk/publications or call **0300 303 5933**.

Donate

Your donations help us develop tools like 'This is me' so people with dementia can get the care they need. [Donate online.](https://alzheimers.org.uk/donate)

Loan shark protection

People affected by dementia can be especially vulnerable to illegal moneylenders. Jessica Hubbard hears how Stop Loan Sharks supports people who've been targeted.

Quick read

Society staff are working with Stop Loan Sharks so that more people know where to go for help with illegal loans.

People affected by dementia can be particularly vulnerable when targeted by loan sharks, especially with rising living costs.

Borrowing from loan sharks is dangerous, and safe alternatives include credit unions.

Stop Loan Sharks has supported people with dementia and many carers who've been targeted by illegal lenders.

‘We are here to protect and support anyone who has been affected by loan sharks, including those with dementia, their families and their carers,’ says Cath Wohlers, Liaise Team Manager at Stop Loan Sharks.

As living costs have risen, more people have had to borrow to cover bills, care costs, energy and food. If they're refused credit elsewhere, they may turn to illegal moneylenders – loan sharks.

Staff at Alzheimer's Society have been working with Stop Loan Sharks to make sure people know where to go for help and advice.

Illegal lenders

A loan shark is a person who lends money and asks for repayments without being licensed by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).

These lenders often charge high and illegal rates of interest, causing borrowers to amass huge debts or forcing them to take out further loans to keep up with repayments.

People who borrow from loan sharks are at risk of intimidation and harassment. They also don't have the same legal protections as those who borrow from legitimate lenders.

Key warning signs that somebody may be a loan shark include not being given paperwork or details about a loan. They may use threatening and intimidating behaviour, or demand that you hand over items like bank cards or a passport until you can repay.

Stop Loan Sharks, set up by the England Illegal Money Lending Team, raises awareness of the dangers of this type of borrowing and works with the FCA to investigate loan sharks. It also prosecutes illegal lenders and



Cath Wohlers

supports people affected by this crime in England.

Targeted

Tim (not his real name) has early-onset Alzheimer's and borrowed money from someone he considered to be a friend.

Following his diagnosis, Tim retired earlier than he would have liked and borrowed £1,200 in total due to unexpected expenses. He struggled to keep up repayments and woke up one morning to find that his car had been vandalised.

The police put the man in touch with Stop Loan Sharks and he is no longer being harassed.

Since 2012, Stop Loan Sharks has seen 21 cases involving people affected by dementia. Of the people it supported in 2022, 8% were carers.

In one case, a woman caring for her father, who has dementia, owed loan sharks around £75,000.

She borrowed from friends and family to try to make repayments but couldn't keep up and had her property damaged. Thankfully, she received support after reaching out to Stop Loan Sharks.

Personal gain

Cath at Stop Loan Sharks says, 'Loan sharks are predatory, ruthless criminals and they will often target the most vulnerable members of our communities for their own personal gain.'

'Unfortunately, this sometimes includes those who have dementia.'

'The army of carers who are supporting those with dementia are also extremely vulnerable. Some of them are family members who may have had to give up work to care for their loved one.'

'Unfortunately, this often leaves them financially vulnerable and a target for loan sharks as well.'

Loan sharks are often known to the people they target. In some cases, they may be acquaintances or supporting someone with dementia in a care home.

'We are raising awareness of the dangers of loan sharks among those in the caring profession,' says Cath, 'and we offer free training to those people in frontline services on how to spot the signs that someone may have fallen victim to a loan shark.'

'We are also working with our partners to highlight the alternatives that are available to those who need to access affordable credit, such as credit unions.'

Help is available

Cath says that anyone who needs support or advice about illegal loans can get in touch with Stop Loan Sharks or equivalent organisations in other parts of the UK. She also encourages people to approach a credit union if they've been refused a loan elsewhere.

Julie Osbourne, Local Services Manager for Bath and North East Somerset and Swindon at Alzheimer's Society, says, 'It's reassuring to know that there is support available from Stop Loan Sharks and that the risk posed by loan sharks to people living with dementia is recognised and being acted upon.'

'Staff have met with our local teams to inform us of their work, raising our awareness and understanding of this issue so we are better able to provide support and refer people to the correct agencies.'

For information about illegal lenders:

In England, call the Stop Loan Sharks 24/7 confidential hotline on **0300 555 2222** or visit **www.stoploansharks.co.uk**

In Northern Ireland, call the Trading Standards consumer line on **0300 123 6262** or see **www.consumerline.org**

In Wales, call the Wales Illegal Money Lending Unit 24-hour helpline **0300 123 3311**.



Photograph: Marco Verch Flickr

Call our dementia support line on **0333 150 3456** for personalised information and advice, or visit **alzheimers.org.uk/cost-living-crisis**

Consumer panel: Gift ideas

Members of Norwich's Dementia Voice group tell us what they thought of a range of gifts designed with dementia in mind.

The Dementia Voice group in Norwich meets every month to have their say about our and others' work.

They welcomed us to a session to try out gift ideas from our online shop, including games and activities to enjoy alone or together.

All About Us

The All About Us game, from Relish, prompts conversation with questions about each decade of your life. Which decade and topic depends on where you land as you travel around the board.

People enjoyed sharing stories while playing, but suggested improvements too.

While they liked the dice's size and feel, Tina said, 'Its colour matches one of the categories. Maybe make it black and white instead?'

Many agreed with Ray that the tense of the questions could be confusing – using present tense despite asking about the past or future.

Ian thought the picture on box made it look more complicated than it is.

'It's off-putting,' he said. 'It needs something to say, "Engage with me!"'

The game itself was fun, getting everyone talking. Questions about their 20s made Carole say, 'Oh the secrets are coming out now...!'

Animal Snap

Relish's Animal Snap includes 48 cards that you can use to play three games – snap, pair or full house. Each card has a picture of an animal that can be matched with identical or similar cards.

Dan and Ian tried a game, with some help from Jan and Tina.

'The cards have very clear pictures,' said Jan, though she added, 'Toddlers' snap cards would also work fine.'

Ian said he was confused by the image sometimes being upside down, depending on how it was put down.

Although Dan occasionally couldn't recall what you were

supposed to say when you saw a pair, the group took this in its stride.

Margaret said it reminded her of a mahjong game she plays on her computer.

Jigsaw puzzles

Relish jigsaws come in 13, 35, 63 or 100 pieces, with evocative and engaging pictures. The box may be used to complete the puzzle, with final image and conversation prompts on the inside lid.

People liked the range of pictures, including countryside, city and wildlife scenes.

Trying the 35-piece 'Bathing Birds' design, Ray liked the size of the pieces, though Carole thought they could be thicker.

'I can struggle to pick them up,' she said.

Ray noted that some people could find it awkward to complete the puzzle within the box, though they wouldn't have to use it for this.

Rex said he'd only do a jigsaw once, whereas the other games you could play over again. If so, the group agreed you could find someone else who'd like the puzzle.

Simple tablet

Emporia's Simple tablet computer is designed to make reading news, watching videos and keeping in touch easy and enjoyable, with straightforward menus and controls. It comes with a range of apps, earphones and a charging cradle.

Ray picked up the tablet, navigated the menus and found an online jigsaw easily, playing it straightaway. He and Carole were both impressed by it. She noted he currently has a Samsung tablet because he found an iPad too complicated.



Photographs: Jason Bye

Win
See p39



Ray was pleased you could use a stylus with the Simple tablet, since he finds this less fiddly than using his finger on the touch screen.

Tina liked that it came with so many apps. Ian was glad you can still add others, since he'd want Google Calendar so he and Tina can see each other's appointments.

If you choose to install a SIM card into the Simple tablet, you can also use it to make voice and video calls. If you find yourself without wifi, you can still access the internet using your data allowance on the SIM.

Tactile Turn

The Tactile Turn is a soft fabric ring that folds in on itself endlessly, providing a sense of comfort and calm. Its textures and colours stimulate the senses, while the repetitive motion brings focus and relaxation.

Cheryl knew someone who'd benefit from it, since they had shingles and this would help to avoid them picking at their skin.

Rolling it up her arm so it looked like a float, Carole joked, 'Shall we go swimming?'

Margaret could barely put it down, saying, 'It's brilliant – I want one of them!'

'It feels like you're occupied,' she said, 'and it's relaxing.'



Visit shop.alzheimers.org.uk or call 0333 366 0035 for these and many other products:

- **All About Us game**
– £24.99 plus VAT
- **Animal Snap**
– £9.99 plus VAT
- **Relish 13, 35, 63 or 100-piece jigsaw puzzles**
– each £14.16 plus VAT
- **Simple tablet**
– £250.00 plus VAT
- **Tactile Turn**
– £20.82 plus VAT

VAT relief

People living with dementia and anyone purchasing on their behalf can buy many of our helpful products VAT free – saving 20%.

Simply tick the box stating that you're eligible for VAT relief at checkout when buying from shop.alzheimers.org.uk

Tennis galore

Craig Whymark in Essex, aka Fanny Galore, tells us why he organised a special tennis match to raise money for the Society.



Craig, as Fanny Galore, with his family.

When my dad's mum passed away in 2019, we just thought he was quiet and depressed because he was grieving. But over the following weeks and months, something still wasn't right.

Initially I suggested counselling for Dad, which he agreed to. Then Mum noticed he was having memory problems and had become more withdrawn.

Because of his football background in the 1970s and 1980s, when he did lots of heading the ball, Dad's GP did some memory tests. They referred him for brain scans which confirmed he has Alzheimer's disease.

We were upset about the diagnosis. My partner lost his nan to dementia, so I had an idea of what was to come. Everyone dies in the end, but we knew it could be a long, drawn out and upsetting process. After the diagnosis, we didn't have much support. When Dad had cancer, we were getting information and

doctors would be calling us, but with dementia we have to say something. It's disappointing.

Taking power back

We can't do much to help Dad ourselves, so raising money for Alzheimer's Society is our way of taking a bit of the power back.

Dementia affects so many people, and younger people are being diagnosed. We're hearing about new drugs through clinical trials, but that can only happen if people donate.

I'm a drag queen and I knew I could get people's attention in drag. So, I've been doing collections at events. I ask people to raise their hands if they have been affected by dementia, and a hand will go up at every table.

I love making people laugh but I'm a real person behind all the clothes and make-up and when I come off the stage, I don't always feel like laughing myself.

My voice may quiver or tears well up in my eyes, but I'm doing it for Dad.

Coming through Covid and the difficult time people experienced, I want men to know that when we are sad, we can express that.

Dad and hero

I got the idea for a fundraising tennis match when I watched Barbara Windsor's husband talking about running the London Marathon. I spoke to the manager of Harlow Lawn Tennis Club, who lost both her parents to dementia, and she wanted to help.

I played in drag as Fanny Galore and local businesses were amazing, giving donations and prizes. Over 100 people attended. We've now raised over £14,000 and we're thinking of making it an annual event.

People have shared their own memories of Dad on the fundraising page, a lot of them Ipswich Town fans. When I read the comments to him, he got emotional.

He's just Dad to us, but to fans he was their hero.

[Visit alzheimers.org.uk/fundraising](https://alzheimers.org.uk/fundraising) for lots of great ideas for raising money to fight dementia, or call 0330 333 0804.

More than martial

John Brinda, in Hertfordshire, is sharing a lifelong passion for karate with others affected by young-onset dementia.



My partner Sonja was diagnosed with young-onset Alzheimer's disease aged 55.

Receiving this diagnosis so young put life on hold for my family, including my stepdaughter at a time when she really needed her mum.

Sonja was very bright and bubbly – the life and soul of the party. She loved to dance, and everybody loved Sonja.

We started noticing changes to her personality and memory five or six years ago, but never thought it could be dementia. We assumed it was the menopause.

Confusing time

We went to the GP and Sonja had some memory tests. At first, they didn't think it could be dementia because of her age.

Sonja was prescribed medication, which she didn't take. She was in denial about having dementia and would tell the memory clinic she was fine. It was a confusing time.

For a while I carried on my job as a bus driver, but Sonja became worse over a period of six to eight months and things became too much. By August 2021, it was evident Sonja couldn't look after herself at home and I became her full-time carer.

A variety of factors, including Sonja becoming aggressive, led to her being sectioned in 2022. This was a turning point, as she was finally able to get the level of care that she needed.

Sonja now lives in a nursing home. She's at the stage where she doesn't walk or talk, though she still recognises me as I visit regularly.

Shared passion

I have trained in karate for over 40 years and taught part time, sometimes with Sonja. We both have black belts and Sonja has medals and pictures in her room.

One day during a visit, I decided to bring some focus mitts – gloves that you hit or slap in karate. Sonja's face lit up. She was hitting the pads and really laughing.

When it comes to dementia, people can feel frustration and anger. I realised that karate could be a positive and safe outlet for that.

Well received

Sonja and I used to attend a young-onset support group run by Hertswise, a local partnership. I continue to go

as I still really benefit from it, and decided to bring karate to the group.

I taught a few sessions and they were really well received. We did a series of gentle exercises and I made sure everyone was included.

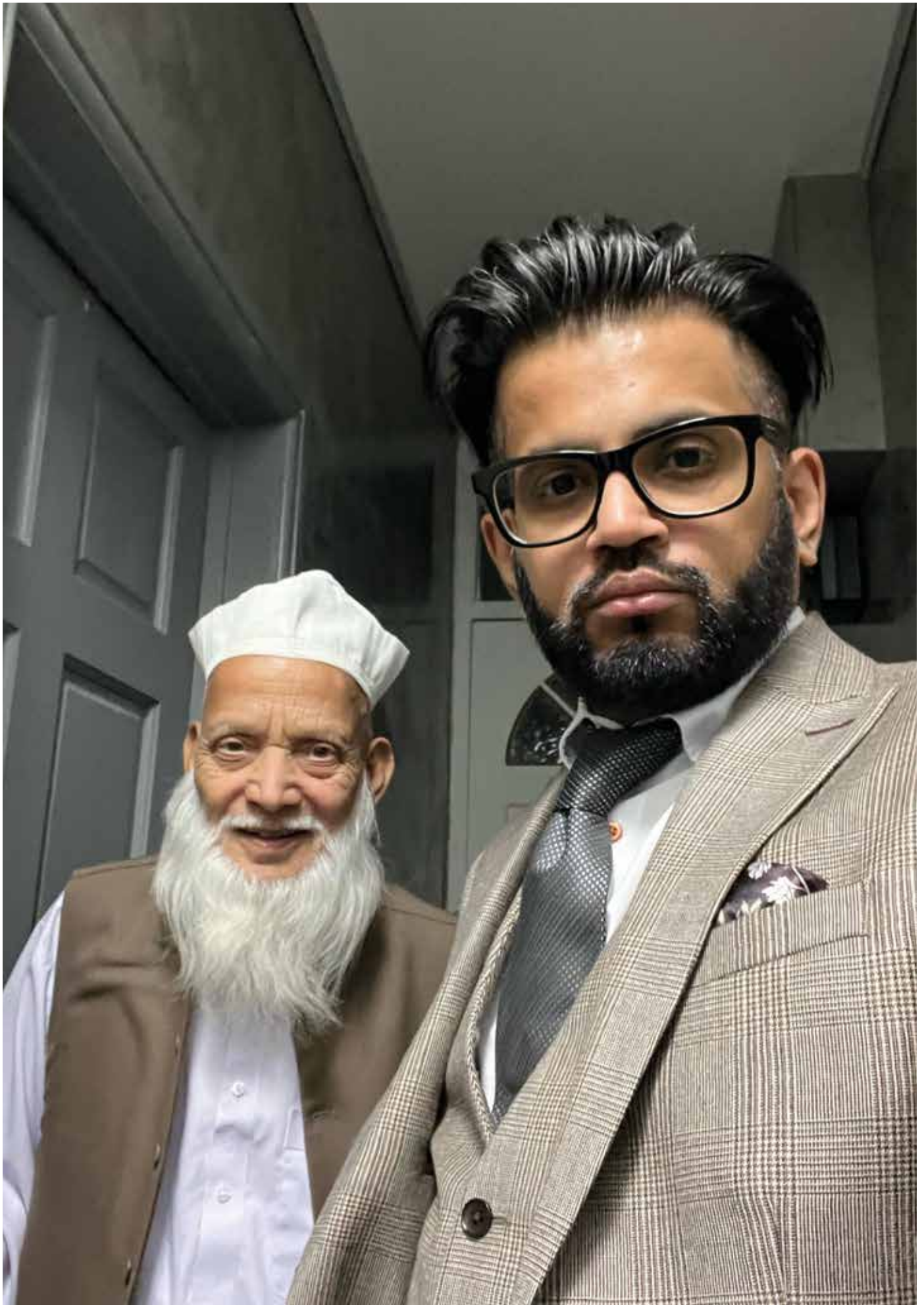
Karate can be adapted so well. For instance, you can slow movements down so they look like tai chi, and combine them with breathing.

It's convinced me that exercise and martial arts can have a really positive impact on people living with dementia.

Using my experience

As a carer, I felt like I'd lost my sense of identity. When you do something like karate with the person you care for, you're working together and can step outside of the carer role.

I've now decided to work for Hertswise, so I can use my experience to help others affected by young-onset dementia.



Hand on heart

Shahbaz Bashir is a full-time carer for his father, who has Alzheimer's. Jessica Hubbard speaks to a son who wants to know he did everything he could for his dad.

Quick read

Shahbaz Bashir, in Peterborough, feels it was his duty to give up work to care for his dad Muhammad full time.

Health system backlogs during the pandemic meant it took years before Muhammad was diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

An Alzheimer's Society dementia adviser helped Shahbaz to get financial and emotional support.

Shahbaz wants to raise awareness about dementia within his community, as not everyone was accepting of his dad's diagnosis.

Shahbaz Bashir recently became a full-time carer for his dad Muhammad, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's early in 2023.

Muhammad previously worked in factories, including a car factory in Luton. Shahbaz says he used to be 'laid back, happy and getting on with life'.

'That's not the same anymore, and now he has his good days and bad days,' says Shahbaz.

First signs

'Mum and Dad came from a small village in Pakistan,' Shahbaz says. 'They're devout Muslims and their faith is very important to them.'

'Dad was the first to come to Britain to support his wider family. He was then called back to an arranged marriage and had my two older brothers in Pakistan. All four came over to Britain in the early 70s, where my sister and I were born.'

The first signs that something wasn't right with Muhammad came in 2020. On one occasion he didn't recognise his granddaughter, and he started to act strangely in other ways.

'The lockdown meant Dad lost his routine, and this is when we started noticing changes in him,' Shahbaz says.

'One morning Mum found his clothes in the bin outside, covered in mud. Dad would attempt to go into the garden, instead of the bathroom when he needed the toilet.'

'He thought he was back in Pakistan, where they didn't have toilets in the house growing up.'

Long journey

Shahbaz became desperate for help as his dad's changing behaviour caused tension in the household.

'I started looking for help. I was looking for some kind of diagnosis, but it was a long, hard journey,' he says.

'I called the GP but, because of the Covid backlog, we had to wait nine months for a referral. Eventually, we had a video call with the occupational therapist.'

Initially Muhammad masked his symptoms. He was encouraged to take up his old routine, a practice known as reablement, but it soon became clear that he could no longer do everyday tasks for himself.

'I felt like I was trying to get Dad to fake it in front of the healthcare professionals,' Shahbaz says.

'He kept on telling them that he could look after himself, but it was more pride talking than his actual abilities.'

In 2022 Muhammad had some tests at a memory clinic.

'Dad was eventually diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in early 2023,' Shahbaz says.

'Even though we had an interpreter, he frequently said, "I don't understand what she's saying." Dad is very old-school and felt uncomfortable telling his medical details to a woman.'

Burden lifted

Shahbaz wasn't clear on the support available to him as a carer.

'I'd ring up social services and ask for help, but they wanted me to explain what I needed and I didn't know what I was entitled to,' he says.

“

I'd ring up social services and ask for help, but they wanted me to explain what I needed and I didn't know what I was entitled to ”

He then came across the Society's website and called our Dementia support line, where he was put in touch with a local dementia adviser called Oz.

'Dad and I were comfortable with the diagnosis, but my mum, my wife and some extended family found it hard to accept,' Shahbaz says.

'To hear from Oz that this was a normal reaction felt like a huge burden off my shoulders.'

Oz helped Shahbaz to claim various benefits and a council tax reduction.

'We didn't know anything about these before speaking to Oz. Up until that point I was really struggling.'

Big decision

Shahbaz had seen bereaved friends and family with regrets that they weren't more present towards the end of a parent's life. So, he quit work to care for his dad full time.

'I was stuck in the middle of the memory clinic, adult social care, Mum and Dad,' he says.

'So, I gave up my job and became a full-time carer. It has always been ingrained in me that it's a son's duty to care for his parents.'

'A lot of people I know have had parents pass away and I've seen the change and the regrets it brings for them. I thought, I've got the perfect opportunity to see Dad through the end.'

'Whenever that end comes, I can hand on heart say, "I wasn't perfect. But I tried my best, and I've got no regrets."'

This change has been emotionally and financially challenging for Shahbaz.

'As a coping mechanism, I've just detached myself,' he says. 'I don't believe me thinking or worrying about it is going to change anything. If it is going to affect something, it's going to be my mood and the way I treat Dad.'

'It's not that I don't process it – I've accepted it. I find it a lot easier just to keep trekking along rather than focus on Dad's dementia.'



‘Financially I’m really struggling, so I have to plan quite carefully. Unexpected expenses are a challenge.’

Shaken faith

‘In February this year, Dad’s faith was shaken,’ says Shahbaz. ‘He asked “Why is God doing this to me?” He’d been struggling to memorise his prayers, so he asked my brother to write them down for him.’

‘But then he’d forget that. So, he asked my uncle to do the same. The imam across the road helped too but, of course, Dad still forgot.’

Muhammad was adamant that he would observe Ramadan, the month when Muslims typically fast from dawn till sunset. But forgetting that he was eating caused tension in the house.

‘For Dad, Ramadan was the same as every year,’ says Shahbaz. ‘He thinks he’s still got the body and mind of a 20-year-old. But we advised him not to fast. We said it was OK because he didn’t have good health and that he would be forgiven. But Dad was insistent.’

‘We knew that he was eating though. He would leave his dirty plates on the table. In his mind he was fasting, but he just forgot that he was eating.’

Eventually, Muhammad was convinced that he did not need to fast. ‘Dad was not happy about it at all, but you need to be healthy to fast,’ says Shahbaz.

Lack of understanding

Some family members didn’t accept Muhammad’s diagnosis and Shahbaz puts this down to a lack of understanding about dementia.



‘Everyone noticed the changes, but they kept saying that he was going “loopy”,’ he says. ‘They weren’t accepting it could be something more serious, like an illness or disease.’

‘I have to be really blunt with Mum, who sometimes thinks Dad is just making excuses. But he’s old, frail and he’s got dementia, he often doesn’t know why he’s doing things.’

‘If he’s wet himself for example, that’s already a terrible position to be in as a father – watching your son clean up after you, or your daughter or your wife. But then to be humiliated on top of that is a bit too much.’

Shahbaz has offered to put Alzheimer’s Society in touch with his mosque to help raise awareness about dementia in his community. He wants more people to be better placed to understand and accept a dementia diagnosis.

For personalised information and advice, call our Dementia support line on **0333 150 3456**, or for Welsh speakers call **03300 947 400**.

Our dementia advisers can talk to you in other languages – call **0333 150 3456**, say the English word for your language, end the call and an interpreter will call you back.

Donate

Dementia advisers like Oz are a lifeline to Shahbaz and others during one of the most difficult periods of their lives. [Donate online.](#)

Ask an expert

‘Can Mum have a hip operation? Her advanced dementia means she can’t give informed consent and there’s no health and welfare LPA.’

Consent for surgery

Whether or not your mum can give informed consent, she can have an operation if that’s the right medical decision for her.

This is still true if she hasn’t set up a lasting power of attorney (LPA) for health and welfare, which would have appointed someone to make decisions about care and medical treatment on her behalf.

Who decides and how?

If someone can’t give consent for themselves and there’s no LPA for health and welfare, it’s their doctors who’ll decide whether to operate.

Your mum’s doctors would need to think about what’s in her best interests and look at her medical history.

They should still listen to your mum’s views if she’s able to express them. This includes wishes previously recorded in her medical records, or if she set these out in an ‘advance statement’ about her future care and treatment.

The doctors should also talk to you to see what you think, since you may know her wishes and what she’d want if she could decide for herself. However, they should not ask you to make the decision.

The doctors should also check if your mum has made an ‘advance decision to refuse treatment’ and if it covers this operation. These are rare, but they’re different from an advance statement. If she’s made one in the correct way, then it must be followed – it would be treated as her decision.

What if you disagree?

No one has the right to demand treatment that’s not medically appropriate. There could be good

medical reasons why the doctors think the operation is not the best thing to do.

However, being unable to give informed consent is not a reason in itself for someone to be denied surgery. If your mum’s not being given the opportunity to have the operation simply because she’s unable to consent or because she has dementia, then that may count as unlawful discrimination.

If you disagree with the doctors, you could ask for a second opinion. You don’t automatically have the right to a second opinion, but a request for one should be properly considered. The hospital’s Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) team could help you with this – ask at the hospital reception desk to contact them.

The PALS team can also help if you want to make a complaint on behalf of your mum, which is another option.

Visit alzheimers.org.uk/publications or call **0300 303 5933** for our factsheets and other publications.

For information about decision making in England and Wales, see our Mental Capacity Act 2005 (460) and Advance decisions and advance statements (463) factsheets.

The law is different in Northern Ireland, but decisions over someone needing an operation work in a similar way. Rather than a PALS team, you could ask for support with a complaint from the Patient and Client Council.

For more about decision making in Northern Ireland, see our Financial and legal tips (NI467) factsheet.



Your answers

Advice about professionals not understanding a person's symptoms because the person is masking how advanced these are.

'Host mode'

'The consultant came out to start the initial assessment and my mum told him she is capable of looking after herself and does everything herself.

'Luckily there are case records which indicate she isn't able to do anything for herself, along with confusion, incontinence, no memory recall, lost all interests in everything and has many different personalities and chants.

'The consultant was well aware of the host mode my mother was displaying and presenting with.' **CLS1970**

'I learned to put my concerns in writing and send them in ahead of any appointment. The first thing I'd say was that Mum was very good at hiding her problems and could talk a good talk – that she would say that there was nothing wrong. Then I'd give a bullet point list of things I was concerned about with examples of incidents that had concerned me.

'It was also useful to think ahead about what I wanted the GP or social worker to know, so that I didn't forget anything important when we met (my mind always goes blank when they ask, "Is there anything you'd like to add?").

'At the appointment, I'd try and sit out of Mum's sightline so that I could raise my eyebrows, shake my head or pull a face if she was saying something that wasn't correct.

'After the appointment I'd try and linger behind, or catch the person on the doorstep to correct as much as I could. If necessary, I'd also send a follow up email to explain that although mum had said x, actually y was happening.' **Canna**

'I kept a diary of just about everything, and intended to show it to any health or social care professionals when Mum was in host mode. Fortunately,

I never needed to use it because the professionals saw straight through Mum's answers (the sort of, "Yes, of course I can do washing/cleaning/cooking/answer a telephone/get around my home/organise and take my medications/get washed/dressed etc" when clearly she couldn't do any of those things).

'Several telephone conversations with me prior to each appointment also helped. Luckily it was the professionals who made contact with me for an idea of what Mum was like, what she could or couldn't do, before the appointments.' **SkyeD**

'My husband believes he can do everything that he has done before in his life. Friends are amazed at times how he welcomes them and appears very normal.

'He has been in hospital recently. This was extremely difficult as it was very evident that the nurses and even some of the medical staff did not realise that he wouldn't remember what he was told.' **Splatty**

'Wow my mum was brilliant at this! So much so that memory clinic believed she had MCI and could do everything, when in fact she wasn't able to make a cup of tea or put a sandwich together. In the end, I had to take her privately to a neurologist for diagnosis before anyone would listen to me.' **BluTinks**

'When the care team leader came to visit Mum at home as part of the care package, I showed her out and took the opportunity to ask whether she had heard of hostess mode. When she said yes, I said, "You've just had a good example of it." **Andbreathe**

Visit forum.alzheimers.org.uk to read more and join our Dementia Support Forum.

Next time: From a distance

Do you have advice for someone who's struggling to support a person with dementia who lives far away and refuses their help? Email magazine@alzheimers.org.uk or write to the address on p2 by the end of 4 January.

Noticeboard

Your space for messages, posts, updates, opportunities, ideas and more.

Letters

Assisting living



A year ago, my wife Valerie (who has a dementia) and I moved to Aberdeen, Scotland, to an assisted living retirement flat, to be nearer my son and family.

This move has been a positive move for me and my wife. The activities and events provided give us both a chance to socialise and meet the other homeowners. I continue to be my wife's carer, but I know help is available if my wife needs it.

I also have time to pursue my own interests. There is a sense of community in which we all have a say in making decisions and staff are always on hand if needed.

This environment enables me to be with my wife for as long as possible. As one of our fellow neighbours said, 'We are your other family,' which I found very comforting.

Mike Budd

It's wonderful to hear that this move has worked out so well for you!

Finding a place to live that provides the right kind of support and quality of life can be a real challenge. There are so many options from sheltered housing and assisted living to residential and nursing care homes – though what's available where varies so much.

For anyone looking, one source of help with finding a range of housing is a website run by national charity Elderly Accommodation Counsel – www.housingcare.org

Share

Share your views, feedback and news – please email magazine@alzheimers.org.uk or write to the address on p2. We can consider contributions received by 5 January for the February/March issue (wording may be edited).

Your recipes



Spicy tomato and red pepper soup

We asked Dementia Support Forum members for their recipes to help keep food interesting and nutritious despite demands on your time and budget.

Thank you to Skylark/2, whose husband has dementia, for this wonderful soup recipe. It's vegetarian (vegan in fact) and serves four generous portions, or six smaller portions:

Ingredients

Vegetable oil – 1 dessertspoon
Chopped tomatoes – 2 tins
Red pepper – 1, chopped
Onion – 1, chopped
Vegetable stock cubes – 2
Chilli flakes – a sprinkle to taste

- Heat the vegetable oil in a large saucepan and add the red pepper, onion and chilli flakes. Cook gently until soft.
- Add the tinned tomatoes and approximately 1 pint of water. Bring to a gentle boil.
- Add crumbled stock cubes, turn down the heat and cook for about 15 minutes.
- Remove pan from heat and blend.
- Add more seasoning if required. You can serve it topped with a swirl of cream, and with toast or crusty bread if desired.

Seen elsewhere

On Facebook, when Kelly shared her experiences of caring for her Auntie Anne, which inspired her to become a dementia adviser at Alzheimer's Society, many people commented including Elaine Wright:

'What a beautiful story to read. Inspirational. My Mum had Alzheimer's, and my darling daughter Louise took care of her the same way you did with your dear Auntie Anne. My Louise took her into her home where she remained until she passed away. After her experiences looking after my Mum it led Louise into a career as a carer for adults needing social care including elderly. She found her calling but sadly she passed away suddenly in January this year aged just 47. I am sure your Auntie Anne would feel proud of you as I am of my darling daughter. ❤️'

Alzheimer's Society is [@alzheimerssocietyuk](#) on Facebook, and [@alzheimerssoc](#) on [X/Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).



On X/Twitter, Kent law firm Brachers LLP shared how a member of their team had delivered a Dementia Friends session with staff at Hever Castle, the childhood home of Anne Boleyn:

'Today, our Elderly and Vulnerable team lead Mary Rimmer delivered a dementia friends session to nearly 40 staff working at [@hevercastle](#) in an interactive session that supports the Brachers LLP pledge of becoming a dementia friendly business.'

Dementia Friends is [@DementiaFriends](#) on [X/Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), and [@dementia_friends](#) on [Instagram](#).

One Stop festive goodies

We'll receive a percentage of funds from the sale of a variety of Christmas goodies through One Stop's 1,000 convenience stores across England and Wales. This includes an elf pin badge, jumper pin badge, elf toy, elf key ring and Christmas stickers – ideal for your plans for the festive season, including Elf Day on 6 December! Visit onestop.co.uk/christmas for full details and to find your nearest store.



Jelly Drops – now with vitamins



Photograph: Daniel Lightening

Jelly Drops, the award-winning sweets that boost hydration, now come with vitamins B6, B9 and B12.

The sugar-free treats are still 95% water with added electrolytes, and the vitamins have been added to help support cognitive function and the immune system.

Jelly Drops were developed with support from the Society's Accelerator Programme.

Simon Lord, Head of Innovation at the Society, said, 'With the knowledge that one in three people today will develop dementia in their lifetime, innovation is critical to support people now, as well as continued investment in research for a cure.'

'Jelly Drops can keep people out of hospitals for longer and improve quality of life as well as reduce the risk of malnutrition and time spent attending to hydration levels within care and hospital settings.'

Jelly Drops come in six fruity flavours – orange, lemon, blackcurrant, strawberry, raspberry and peach – and 1% profit on every UK purchase goes to Alzheimer's Society.

Visit www.jellydrops.com or call 0808 164 8977.

Puzzles and competitions

Anagramword

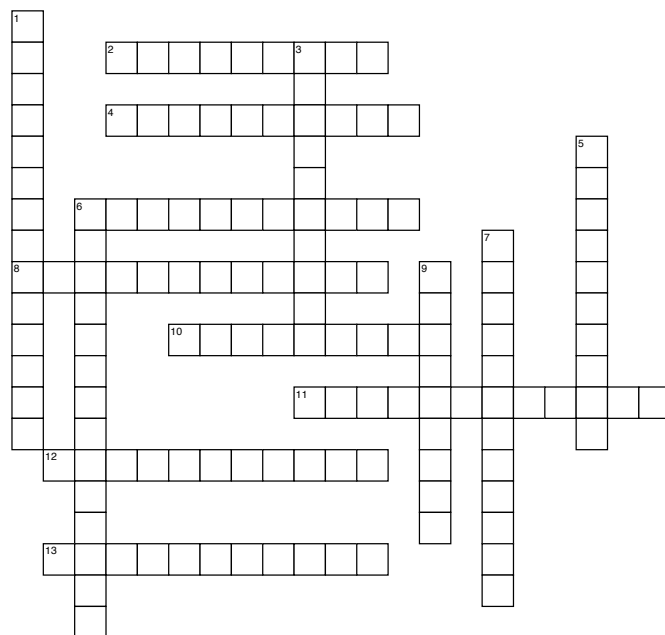
We're delighted to include another puzzle from Pete Middleton, this time with a festive theme! Every clue contains the answer in an anagram – how many can you solve?

ACROSS

- 2 Its charms are evident at this time of year (9)
- 4 Casual ants make a jolly character (5,5)
- 6 PM undid plug for a sweet Christmas dessert (4,7)
- 8 Good! an insane set of ingredients to fill a turkey (4,3,5)
- 10 Mice spine go down well for those with a sweet tooth (5,4)
- 11 Grocers slain by a festive choral gathering (5, 7)
- 12 Garishly fit to illuminate any festive scene (5,6)
- 13 I censor toad that is making paperchains (11)

DOWN

- 1 Creased G-string often sent at Xmas (9,5)
- 3 I'm well nude after a festive drink! (6,4)
- 5 Crane truck allows access to a nutcase (10)
- 6 Kept nag in bliss with this festive favourite (4,2,8)
- 7 Knife scanner is a kingly gift (12)
- 9 Stole item to kiss under (9)



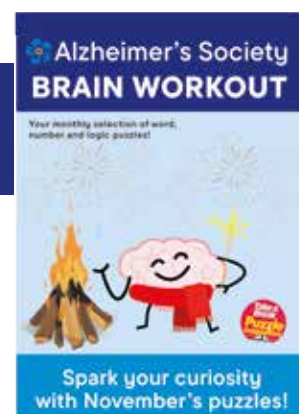
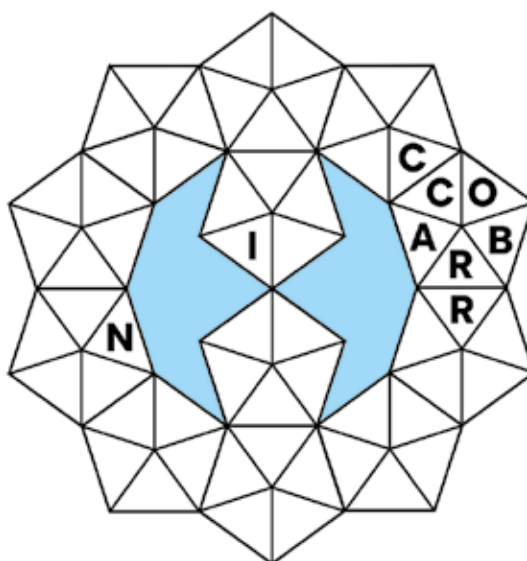
Alzheimer's Society BRAIN WORKOUT

Crystals

Put the words into the pentagons. We've added one already to show two rules that must be followed.

First, words must be written in a clockwise direction. Second, where the pentagons join, the letters in the facing segments must be the same (like the 'C' and 'R' in 'COBRA').

COBRA	FLOCK	PRONE
DRIFT	GAUNT	SLIDE
EVADE	PETAL	VIDEO
EXIST	PIOUS	VOGUE



From November's Brain Workout puzzle pack

If you enjoy word, number and logic puzzles, sign up to Brain Workout to receive a puzzle pack every month. These mind-stimulating puzzles – with a mix of difficulty levels – will keep you on your toes! Visit alzheimers.org.uk/brainworkout today and sign up with a monthly gift that helps provide vital support to people living with dementia.

Send us your competition answers with your name and address by end of 4 January – email magazine@alzheimers.org.uk or write to the address on p2.

All About Us

We have an All About Us game (see p26) from Relish for one lucky winner drawn from correct entries, plus a 63-piece 'City Dusk' jigsaw puzzle for three runners-up.



Q: All About Us questions ask about a decade and topic depending on:

- A. Where you're sat around the board.**
- B. What you had for breakfast.**
- C. Where you land as you travel around the board.**

Mulled wine candles

We have an exclusive Alzheimer's Society mulled wine candle for three lucky winners drawn from correct entries.

Q: Versions of mulled wine from other parts of Europe include:

- A. Champagne, prosecco and cava.**
- B. Glühwein, glögg and kuhano vino.**
- C. Nalewka, ouzo and poitín.**



October/November winners and answers

Christmas cards

A Leib in Hertfordshire won three packs of 10 Love Walking in the Snow Christmas cards, while M Julian in Greater London and P Jones in Herefordshire won a pack each. Answer: The title of our winning Christmas card design is Love Walking in the Snow.

Mind Games

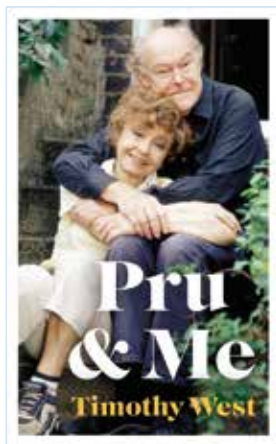
E Lewtas and J Dandy in Lancashire, N Barnacle in West Midlands, CA Johnson in Shropshire and L Walker in Hampshire each won a Mind Games puzzle book. Answer: Mind Games is for you if you want to improve your memory, sharpen your focus, or reduce your risk of dementia.

Brain Workout goodies

J Richardson in Lancashire, M Oakey and PS Kenley in Cumbria, C Donnison in Northumberland, C Crowther and E Farley in Cornwall, I Dallow in Wiltshire, S Worrall in Oxfordshire, B Sharp and L Sinclair each won a Brain Workout coaster, notebook and sticker set with their completed sudoku puzzles.

Book giveaway

M Bland in Norfolk, J Watt in Lincolnshire, A Shaw in County Durham, C Lampert in Cardiff and a reader in Greater London each won a copy of One Last Thing, by Wendy Mitchell.



Book giveaway

See p21 for a chance to win a copy of **Pru and Me** by Timothy West.

Terms and conditions: Competitions are free to enter and open to residents, aged 16 and over, of the UK, Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man and Channel Islands. Winners will be drawn randomly from entries received by midnight on the end date and results are final. Winners will be notified soon after and announced in the following issue. Prizes are subject to availability, and will be sent by Alzheimer's Society or our supplier.

Out of breath. Full of hope.

Feel the exhilaration of pushing yourself for an incredible cause in 2024. Take on a cycling challenge for Alzheimer's Society and explore some of the finest scenery in the UK. Join one of our epic events, ride solo, or organise your own group challenge. Your miles will fund research and vital support for people living with dementia.

Search 'Alzheimer's cycling' to choose your 2024 challenge.



Alzheimer's Society

alzheimers.org.uk/cycling

