

Minutes of the AGM of the APPG on Dementia

8th May 2024, 2.00pm-2.30pm, Room W3, Westminster Hall

Attendees

Members: Debbie Abrahams MP, Ian Byrne MP, Jeff Smith MP, Jason McCartney MP
Other Parliamentarians: Peter Bottomley MP
Staffers: Jack Lovie, Office of Sharon Hodgson MP; Nathan Boroda, Office of Debbie Abrahams MP; Jack Goodenough, Office of Jason McCartney MP; Sam Williams, Office of Jason McCartney MP

Secretariat: Rachael Martin-Smith (National Influencing Manager, Alzheimer's Society); Carlotta Rauch (National Influencing Officer, Alzheimer's Society)

Minutes

Election of officers

- Group Chair Debbie Abrahams MP welcomed attendees to the APPG AGM
- Debbie Abrahams MP then moved to the election of officers for the year ahead. She put herself forward to continue as Co-Chair, with Baroness Browning continuing as the other Co-Chair.
- Baroness Browning was unable to attend, however in her absence Debbie Abrahams MP, Ian Byrne MP, Jeff Smith MP, Jason McCartney MP and Peter Bottomley MP voted to re-elect her.
- Debbie Abrahams MP then moved to her own re-election as Chair. All other attendees present, Ian Byrne MP, Jeff Smith MP, Jason McCartney MP and Peter Bottomley MP, then voted to re-elect her.
- As such, **Debbie Abrahams MP and Baroness Browning were duly elected Co-Chairs of the APPG.**
- Debbie Abrahams then confirmed that the following would like to remain in place as members of the APPG on Dementia: Lord Weir, Lady Greenfield, Lord Blunkett, Lady Finlay, Lady Ritchie, Lord Hunt, Ben Lake MP, Elliot Colburn MP, Judith Cummins MP, Mark Menzies MP, Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP, Laurence Robertson MP, Liz Saville-Roberts MP and Sir Jeremy Wright MP.
- Debbie Abrahams MP also put forward new members of the group: Jason McCartney MP, Sir Stephen Timms MP, Stephen Kinnock MP, Rachael Maskell MP, Tan Dhesi MP, David Simmonds MP, Paul Blomfield MP, Lady Crawley, Caroline Ansell MP, Flick Drummond MP, Ian Byrne MP and Jeff Smith MP.
- **All nominations for members were approved by all attendees: Debbie Abrahams MP, Ian Byrne MP, Jeff Smith MP, Jason McCartney MP and Peter Bottomley MP.**
- Debbie Abrahams then moved on to nominations for Vice-Chairs, with Jason McCartney MP and Sir Jeremy Wright MP nominated. These nominations were supported by all in attendance: Debbie Abrahams MP, Ian Byrne MP, Jeff Smith MP, Jason McCartney MP and Peter Bottomley MP. As such **Jason McCartney MP and Sir Jeremy Wright MP were duly elected as vice-chairs of the APPG.**

Summary of work across 2023/4

- Debbie Abrahams MP ran through the group’s work over the past year, highlighting the [Raising the Barriers report](#) on dementia diagnosis and thanking Alzheimer’s Society for their role on the inquiry.
- She also highlighted the joint meeting with the APPG on Social Care ([documented on X](#)) on progressing adult social care workforce reform.
- Debbie Abrahams MP also made reference to the mini-inquiry conducted by the APPG on dementia and fraud, which the APPG will be looking to publish in the coming weeks.
- Finally, Debbie Abrahams MP celebrated a successful 2023 Dementia Action Week and encouraged attendees to attend this year’s Dementia Action Week Drop-in event on Wednesday 15th May.

Discussion of future direction for the APPG’s work in 2024

- Debbie Abrahams MP then moved the discussion on to the future direction of the APPG’s work in 2024
- Vice-Chair Jason McCartney MP is interested in taking forward work on the digital divide and the struggle that many people with dementia face accessing services (including car parking, paying bills) online. His father lives with dementia and has faced difficulties in this area.
- Chair Debbie Abrahams MP suggested a potential panel opportunities with organisations like parking companies and banks on how older people, particularly those with dementia, are coping with increasing reliance on technology.
- Rachael Martin-Smith agreed that this is something that Alzheimer’s Society would look to take forward as the APPG Secretariat.
- Peter Bottomley MP raised the experience of his aunt who had dementia, and the value that she found in receiving a diagnosis. He noted that he would like to see more discussion in this area. Debbie Abrahams highlighted that this was an area explored in the *Raising the Barriers* report.
- Regarding diagnosis, Rachael Martin-Smith informed the AGM about the work being done by Alzheimer’s Society and Alzheimer’s Research UK on the Blood Biomarker Challenge, and the hope that this could bring dementia blood tests to the NHS and reduce reliance on more invasive procedures such as lumbar punctures and PET scans.
- Jeff Smith MP highlighted the difficulties that people living with dementia face accessing Continuing Healthcare Funding.
- In response, Rachael Martin-Smith said that Alzheimer’s Society would take Jeff’s comments away with regards to the organisation’s policy priorities, but highlighted that Dementia UK are [currently campaigning in this area](#). Debbie Abrahams MP stressed the importance of needing to get social care right to ensure that people living with dementia are getting the care they need.
- There was also discussion on new treatments for Alzheimer’s disease, with Rachael Martin-Smith advising the AGM that the ‘first in class’ new

treatments lecanemab and donanemab are currently awaiting MHRA approval.

- Finally, Debbie Abrahams MP noted that she would like to review the APPG reports that have been conducted during this Parliamentary session and the progress that has been made against these.