

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY EAST LoTHIAN CIC
COMPANY REGISTRATION NO: SC543607
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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DEMENTIA FRIENDLY EAST LoTHIAN CIC

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DEMENTIA FRIENDLY EAST LoTHIAN CIC

COMPANY INFORMATION

Current Directors

Dr. SMM Northrop
Mrs. AM Bissett
Dr. LJ Turney
Mrs. PA Scrutton

Registered Number

SC543607

Registered Office

29 Williamstone Court
North Berwick
East Lothian
EH39 4RQ

Accountant

EA Independent Ltd
5 South Charlotte Street
Edinburgh
EH2 4AN

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY EAST LoTHIAN CIC

DIRECTORS' REPORT

The directors present their report and the financial statements for the period ending 31 March 2025.

Status

The company was incorporated on 24th August 2016 and is a Community Interest Company (CIC) limited by guarantee without share capital.

Principal activities

As a CIC, the main purpose is to provide services and activities to benefit people living with dementia, their friends and families. A full review of the activities for the period ended 31st March 2025 is set out in the Community Interest Company Report accompanying these financial statements.

Directors

The directors who served during the period were:

Dr. SMM Northrop
Dr. LJ Turney

Mrs. AM Bissett
Mrs. PA Scrutton

The directors who resigned during the period were:

Dr. K Rennie (resigned 23 Aug 24)

Directors' responsibilities statement

The directors are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with applicable law (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Under company law the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company and of the profit and loss of the Company for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies for the Company's financial statements and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statement on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Company will continue in business.

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY EAST LoTHIAN CIC

DIRECTORS' REPORT

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Micro-Entity Provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the micro-entity provisions for small companies.

This report was approved by the board on 19 December 2025 and signed on its behalf by:



Dr S Northrop
Director

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY EAST LoTHIAN CIC

**INCOME STATEMENT
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	2025	2024
	£	£
Turnover	165,182	152,112
Other income	-	-
Cost of raw materials and consumables	-	-
Staff costs	(106,476)	(78,876)
Depreciation and other amounts written off assets	(3,214)	(2,834)
Other charges	(58,078)	(70,217)
Taxation	-	-
(Deficit) / Surplus for the period	<u>(2,586)</u>	<u>185</u>

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY EAST LoTHIAN CIC

**BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2025**

	2025		2024	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets		2,672		4,980
Current Assets	41,884		94,187	
Creditors				
Amounts falling due within one year	(42,530)		(94,555)	
Net current assets/(liabilities)		(646)		(368)
Total assets less current liabilities		2,026		4,612
Opening reserves		4,612		4,427
Result for the year		(2,586)		185
Closing reserves		2,026		4,612

The company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the period ended 31 March 2025.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the period ended 31 March 2025 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- (a) ensuring that the company keeps accounting records which comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of each financial year and of its profit or loss for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the micro-entity provisions for small companies.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 19 December 2025 and were signed on its behalf by:



Dr. S Northrop – Director

ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT

Report of the Accountants to the Directors on the unaudited financial statements of Dementia Friendly East Lothian CIC

Year ended 31 March 2025

As set out in the Directors' responsibilities statement, you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements for the period ended 31 March 2025 set out on pages 4 and 5.

In accordance with our terms of engagement, and in order to assist you to fulfil your statutory duties we have compiled the financial statements of the company which comprise the Profit and Loss Account and Balance Sheet from the accounting records and information and explanations you have given to us.

This report is made to the Company's Board of Directors, as a body, in accordance with the terms of our engagement. Our work has been undertaken so that we might compile the financial statements that we have been engaged to compile, report to the Company's Board of Directors that we have done so, and state those matters that we have agreed to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Company and the Company's Board of Directors, as a body, for our work or for this report.

You have acknowledged on the balance sheet as at 31 March 2025 your duty to ensure that the company has kept proper accounting records and to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view under the Companies Act 2006. You consider that the company is exempt from the statutory requirement for an audit for the period.

We have not been instructed to carry out an audit of the financial statements. For this reason, we have not verified the accuracy or completeness of the accounting records or information and explanations you have given to us and we do not, therefore, express any opinion on the financial statements.

E Alsop

E Alsop
EA Independent Ltd
5 South Charlotte Street
Edinburgh
EH2 4AN
19 December 2025

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statement

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY EAST LoTHIAN CIC

**DETAILED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	2025		2024	
	£	£	£	£
Income				
Grants (see below)	161,449		149,346	
Other donations	2,156		188	
Yoga classes and training	1,577		2,578	
		<u>165,182</u>		<u>152,112</u>
Expenditure				
Staff costs	106,476		78,876	
Professional services and consultant costs	-		24,049	
Staff travel, recruitment & training	12,140		5,337	
Activity costs and events	16,232		12,286	
Rent and room hire	8,393		8,767	
Website & IT costs	9,317		4,604	
Legal, insurance and accountancy	6,811		6,830	
Small equipment	82		810	
Promotion	636		2,445	
Administration & office costs	4,467		5,089	
Depreciation	3,214		2,834	
		<u>167,768</u>		<u>151,927</u>
(Deficit) / Surplus		<u><u>(2,586)</u></u>		<u><u>185</u></u>

Movement in Grants deferred

	Brought forward	Net income/ (spend)	Carried forward
	£	£	£
Grants 24-25			
H&SCP – Meeting Centre work	43,200	(43,200)	-
H&SCP – Core work	4,500	(4,500)	-
H&SCP – Dementia Strategy	42,000	(3,400)	38,600
Intergenerational work	1,900	-	1,900
	<u>91,600</u>	<u>(51,100)</u>	<u>40,500</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

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DEMENTIA FRIENDLY EAST LOTHIAN CIC

COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY REPORT
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

CIC 34

Community Interest Company Report

For official use

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Company Name in full

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY EAST LOTHIAN CIC

Company Number

SC543607

Year Ending

31 MARCH 2025

This template illustrates what the Regulator of Community Interest Companies considers to be best practice for completing a simplified community interest company report. All such reports must be delivered in accordance with section 34 of the Companies (Audit, Investigations and Community Enterprise) Act 2004 and contain the information required by Part 7 of the Community Interest Company Regulations 2005. For further guidance see chapter 8 of the Regulator's guidance notes and the alternate example provided for a more complex company with more detailed notes.

(N.B. A Filing Fee of £15 is payable on this document. Please enclose a cheque or postal order payable to Companies House)



Dementia Friendly East Lothian:

Annual Report 2024 - 2025

Who We Are

Dementia Friendly East Lothian (DFEL) is a Community Interest Company (CIC)—a social enterprise that trades for a social purpose. We are "people powered," committed to bringing together people with lived experience of dementia, unpaid carers, communities, and services to change the world together.

Our vision is that people living with dementia and unpaid carers have control over their lives, with choices and opportunities to do the things that matter to them. Our mission is to create spaces where people can empower themselves, working together as equals, valued and respected citizens, exercising their rights to be included and influence the decisions that affect them.

What we do

DFEL works to create environments where people affected by dementia are equal partners, experts by experience co-producing policy and services. We create spaces where people can become empowered and connected and work together as equals. We promote positive social relationships, peer support, and self-advocacy. We place a strong emphasis on community, and connecting people to the people, places and activities that are meaningful to them and where we express our identity. Our approach is based on evidence from lived experience and research in community psychology and dementia best practice.

People affected by dementia told us they want to be with others in the same boat, to be free from stigma, 'to be me' and their voices heard and listened to. This led to our main areas of work:

- The Musselburgh Meeting Centre - develop the Meeting Centre approach in East Lothian

- ' Friendship Groups ' - social groups in the communities for people affected by or interested in dementia.
- Dementia Friendly Communities - communities becoming dementia enabled and inclusive.
- Voice, influence and power – Gatherings, events, workshops, training and projects that inform services and policy at community and county level.

We consciously create spaces where people with lived experiences are experts by experience – equal partners with communities, service providers, decision makers. Where people can build positive relationships and understanding, collaborate and work together to share ideas and learning and co-create and produce projects, plans and policies. We share experience, learning and practice through workshops and training. Our DFEL Gatherings bring it all together – people, organisations and ideas – to share, reflect and create the future together.

Our Values and Approach

This report reviews our performance over the last 12 months against our core values and operating principles:

Experts by Experience: People living with dementia and care partners are experts in what life is like with dementia and what works to adjust to the many changes and challenges that dementia brings.

Rights and Citizenship: We adopt a rights-based approach understanding how stigma, lack of understanding and exclusion deny people living with dementia and care-partners rights including making decisions about their lives and participating in community, culture and family life.

The Social Model of Dementia: We adopt the social model of disability. Dementia medical and social - shaped by barriers in the physical, social and community environment. We work to create physical and social environments that promote inclusion and rights, challenge stigma and discrimination and create opportunities for people to have their say and influence decision.

Assets Based Community Development (ABCD): We focus on "What's strong?" rather than "What's wrong?". In the Meeting Centre and community work, we aim to identify the assets - the gifts of head, heart and hand - that people and communities bring,

Co-production: We work as equal partners—"doing with" rather than "doing to or for". Every person and every place has a contribution to make. We work together - co production - to mobilise and connect people and places using community based and led conversations and action. We design co working opportunities wher people come to learn and plan together, building understanding and friendship.

The Meeting Centre Team

The Musselburgh Meeting Centre Team is made up of skilled, enthusiastic and committed people who care deeply about their work and have a well developed sense of fun.

April Govan manages the Meeting Centre, with Dominika Gadomski as Group Facilitator and Jennifer McKay as Arts and Engagement Facilitator. They bring their gifts of caring, playfulness, organisation and creativity. Faye Rolland has volunteered with us from the start and is our official poet and tea maker extraordinaire. We are also very fortunate to have the support of student volunteers from Queen Margaret University - Jane Wilson and Caitlin Hone. They are a great team, working together to change lives.

Our Board of Directors - Laura Turney, Annes Bissett and Pat Scrutton have provided invaluable oversight and support for our governance and strategic direction, so important for a development project with. Big vision.

Elaine Alsop from Charityfin continues to keep our finances in order and ensure we have the resources we need to do our work. Elaine's support has been invaluable, even more so this year and looking ahead as we go into our final year.

Over the last year, two of our original Musselburgh Meeting Centre team members left. Fiona Barrett, the first Manager of the Meeting Centre, in March for a new and exciting post with Meeting Centres Scotland. This is another first - setting up a new Meeting Centre in a hospital. Fiona played a key role in setting up the Meeting Centre and creating a great foundation for the Centre over future years. We also said farewell to Fiona's husband Norman Barrett who helped in many ways from driving members to setting up the sound system. Members and the team gave Fiona a fabulous send off, letting her know how much members and the team valued her work. Sandiann Devanny our admin support left in July after helping us set up our admin base. Members and the team arranged a special cake and a big 'Thank You' for all she did.

April now heads up the Musselburgh Meeting Centre Team and will support the move into the new Integrated Meeting and Day Centre.

We have 3 new team members. Susan Davison joined us in March as Office Administrator. Susan is a great addition to the team, supporting the Meeting Centre team, DFEL's core work and the Board. Susan brings order and focus to our work and will play a key role in the transition process.

Also in March we appointed two part time development workers - Loreen Pardoe and Ellie Thom who will work on the ELHSCP-funded Development Project. Ellie's role is to help us share our stories as Members, carers and the team about what we do and the difference we make. Loreen will work to develop the Meeting Centre approach in Haddington and Prestonpans. All our work comes together as people commence and as we support a community of learning and practice, including workshops and Gatherings.

Our activities this year

Our work plays an important role in supporting the East Lothian Dementia Strategy. In 2023 we opened East Lothian's first Meeting Centre in Musselburgh and are now developing the approach across East Lothian, bringing together our work over the last decade. Together they provide a firm foundation for change and for the development of a new integrated centre run by the John Bellany Day Centre from April 2026.

Meeting Centres provide a social space, friendship and opportunities 'to be me' for people with mild cognitive impairment and dementia. They also provide access to expert advice and support. Centres are based on 11 essential features that research shows help people living with dementia and care-partners adjust to the changes and challenges that life with dementia brings. The Meeting Centre approach manifests our values and experience and is a framework for growth through collaboration, impact and ambition.

The Musselburgh Meeting Centre Year

The Meeting Centre team has continued to develop the Monday and Friday sessions and support a monthly Carers Space. They have also taken over the Thursday Friendship Group and started a new Tuesday session in February. The year has also seen the us increasing opportunities to bring together people from different Meeting Centre Groups and from Alzheimer Scotland's Dementia Cafe.

Led by Fiona, the team continue to create a special and life changing experience for Members, putting the 11 Essential Features and DFEL values into practice. Members are clearly having fun, meaningful experiences and with care-partners and families, adjusting to life with dementia to 'still be me'. Fiona left us at the end of March 2025 for pastures new. April has taken over running the Centre (see below).

COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY REPORT
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

As we come towards the final year of the Meeting Centre project the model has developed round a strong and varied programme of activities, continuations to build strong links with the community through trips out and visits in and around growing involvement in community life. We are also continually reviewing and adjusting how we work as many Members and Carers have increased impairments and need for support.

A growing focus has been on preparing for our final year of funding. In early 2025 we were delighted to hear that funding had been found for an integrated Meeting and Day Centre. We worked with EHSCP, service providers and community groups to argue for a Day Centre for Musselburgh. In a tight funding climate it made sense to collaborate and work with others to find a way to have both. That strategy worked and the new Integrated Meeting and Day Centre will be open in 2026 and DFEL's Meeting Centre work will move to the new service in April 2026. This will be run by John Bellany Day Centre as it will be a service regulated by the Care Inspectorate.

The Musselburgh Meeting Centre: what we've been doing this year

The Musselburgh Meeting Centre opened its doors on Monday and Friday mornings on April 2023 for 3 Members. We now also facilitate the Musselburgh Friendship Group and The Tuesday Club, a new group which started in March 2025, taking us to 4 groups a week.

The Monday and Friday Club

Over the year, Members met every Monday and Friday except for 2 weeks over Christmas. There is a total of 23 regular members - 13 different people living with dementia and 10 different carers. Most people living with dementia come twice a week (10) and almost half come to more than 2/3 of the sessions (high attenders). This suggests that Meeting Centre sessions are a regular part of the weekly diaries for members.

Carers were more likely to come in once a week and only 3 carers were high attenders, suggesting they are using it as a flexibly resource.

Meeting Centres are based on keeping brains and bodies active, building friendships with peers and being active members of the community.

Inside the Centre Members have done a range of activities from designing Christmas cards with Kate Allan to writing poetry, gardening, singing, dancing and cooking. What happens in the centre is decided by Members and there are always options and choices.

The Garden is a very important part of our day. Each session we get outdoors for a walk, keeping moving even if just a short way. Members organised their own Royal Garden Party

COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY REPORT
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

and Olympic Games, making full use of the garden at St Andrews High Church. A high spot was Members' first potato harvest which was transformed into a healthy and delicious soup for lunch. The garden is a great place for a stroll and a chat and some quiet time in nature. The team have continued to ensure members and care-partners have a wide range of things to do, people to see and places to go.

Dominika and the kitchen team prepare our elevenses, often with fresh scones and always served with a warming cuppa. This is a key element of our work and a important way to help members do the daily tasks we take for granted in a safe and supportive environment. A high spot was when we harvested the tatties and made them into a tasty potato salad. Jennifer develops arts activities for members, including working with Members to help them use artistic methods to express their ideas about the Meeting Centre for the DFEL Gathering.

Members have been out and about in Musselburgh, cycling the streets on Trishaws with Cycling Without Age; at the Lagoons with Kristian, the ELC Countryside Ranger and had a picnic in Lewisvale Park. We also had trips to the Musselburgh Museum with thanks to Betty and Kitty.

We are fortunate to have been visited by many guests. John Killick, local poet, delighted us with his poems. Local MSP Colin Beattie joined us and heard our concerns about the pavements near the Centre. Colin took this up with the Council on our behalf.

Members have also supported 2 research studies this year: A Heriot Watt research project (CONSOLIDATE) on tackling the challenges of ageing and Strictly Seniors a research project with Queen Margaret University into performance, psychology and dementia.

Over time, our relationships have deepened. One of our favourite and most valued relationship is with Ellie and pupils from Musselburgh Grammar School. This year we welcomed a new group of 8 young people who joined us every week during term time and for special events including Christmas. This year, Members and young people had a day at Musselburgh Library to celebrate Scottish Book week. Students were also involved in the DFEL Gathering in the autumn on Brain Health where they joined people of all ages talking about how brains, ageing and staying well. A Carer designed a project for Members to organise leaver's ceremony for pupils. Members presented pupils with good luck cards and a gift which consisted of oatcakes and sardines. This is based on a Musselburgh tradition going back at least 300 years where 'youngsters' leaving the town to go to work, college or University would receive a package of porridge oats and pickled herring as a goodbye present. This was to ensure that they would always have a full belly during their future studies or work.

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COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY REPORT
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Musselburgh Meeting Centre Carers Space

The monthly Carers Space is for Care-partners from the Meeting Centre and beyond. We welcome people living with dementia at the Meeting Centre for these sessions if they choose. The Carers Space is facilitated by Anne Bissett from Open Arms Carers. Anne gifts us her expertise and experience in developing and promoting peer-led support for carers. We've also appreciated support from Kirsteen Powell from CoEL who's been a great support for the Carers Space since it started.

Over the year, there were 12 Carers Space sessions, involving a core of 8 different carers. An average of 4 carers came to each session and there was an even split between carers using the space regularly and occasionally.

The Musselburgh Friendship Group

The Friendship Group first met in 2018 in Prestonpans/Cockenzie and has kept meeting ever since. They have worked with us to set up the Musselburgh Meeting Centre, interview employees, meet with funders and decision makers over many years.

The Friendship Group officially became part of the Musselburgh Meeting Centre this year and continue to meet weekly apart from Christmas. Over the year, 21 different people living with dementia and 11 care partners came along, plus 19 friends come the community. On average 10 people come along weekly. The Friends get together for a coffee and chat and sometimes activities as well. In July the Friendship Group also held an open day and invited the Alzheimer Scotland link workers and people from the community to pop in.

The Tuesday Club

The Tuesday Club was launched in February 2025 with a focus on people in the community at an early stage of life with dementia. It is designed to be peer-led with light-touch facilitation. We are fortunate to have Caitlin and Jane as volunteers. By the end of March we had 2 members leading plans for the new group. Alan and Margaret invited people they knew from their networks, including the Dementia Cafe and local churches. We're looking forward to this group growing over the final stage of our work.

Coming together - Days out and DFEL events

This year we have created opportunities for people from different groups to come together and also looked for opportunities to involve the D Cafe members together as well. We know

from the Friendship Groups and DFEL Gatherings the difference this can make - people came together for fun and friendship.

In June, Members, Friends and care partners organised an Open Day when they invited Graham Galloway from Meeting Centre Scotland and local community leaders to join Members for a 'typical day'.

All 3 groups were invited to to join the 'Big Day Out' - a trip to the Kelpies and Hopetoun House, trips to Merry Hatton and of course all got together for the Meeting Centre Christmas Party and DFEL Gatherings and Events and the Community Day.

What people tell us

Members and friends tell us they value greatly their time at the Centre and how it changes their lives for the better.

The Merryhatton Christmas Trip "I [I] oved browsing all the lovely Christmas decorations, friendly staff, great Bacon roils "

Picnic in the Park - Lewisvale Park

- "Lovely place, it was like being tin the countryside great company"
- "It was good to remember the park when the kids were small – showing them the birds in the aviary"
- "Watching the kids playing while we ate our picnic lunch was so nice"

Big Day Out to Hopetoun House and Kelpies

- "Enjoyed tour around the house, guide was very knowledgeable and told us lots of history about the House"
- "the house staff were very attentive and made sure there was lots of seats for us to rest as we did the tour"
- "Lots of organising went into making it such a great daywe weren't left to ourselves we had a great tour inside the kelpies ...they took my breathe away."

Delivering the Essential Meeting Centre Features

Members and Care Partners clearly enjoy their time at the Meeting Centre and the friendship, meaning and fun it brings. One of our priorities for the final year of this development project is to highlight the importance of the Essential Features and how they are applied in practice.

Community & Rights:

Members have opportunities to have their voices heard and make a difference. For example, Members invited local MSPs Paul McLennan and Colin Beattie to the Centre to talk about dementia and how they can help promote members' concerns. Colin Beattie wrote to the local council about our concerns about the state of local pavements. Sadly this was not taken up by the Council, but we appreciated that our concerns had been raised.

A highlight of the year is Musselburgh's Community Day. Members planned what they wanted to do at the Day and developed a brain health quiz to get people engaged and informed. Members also worked with Kate Allan to design DFEL's Christmas cards which were sold to raise money for the Centre. Most members came along on the day to host and support their stand.

Adjusting to change

We work to find ways that enable Members and care partners to have opportunities to do things that matter to them live well and 'feel like me'. This sense of identity and activity is key to adjusting to life with dementia for people living with dementia and care-partners.

Often it is the small daily activities that make the difference - being able to make a cup of tea, do the shopping, cooking and eating together. We actively find ways for Members to do these activities safely and as independently as possible, helping to retain skills and self management.

As members grapple with sensory, physical and mobility challenges as well as dementia, we change how we work to provide more one-one opportunities and inclusive approaches so that everyone can paint, or have their voices heard.

Creating the space

An essential part of our work is coming together as a team to 'create the space' for things to happen, so people are safe, included and can learn and participate. It requires a deep and

personal relationship with members, a person centred and flexible approach working 'in the moment' and connecting members in ways that builds a community of peers and places.

The Development Project

We were delighted to receive funding for a development project for the Meeting Centre approach in East Lothian. This involves a mix of events and workshops and Gatherings as well as capturing the learning from Musselburgh and developing the approach in other areas. Over the last year we have held a series of workshops and events to promote the community of learning and development to demonstrate key aspects of our approach, in particular leadership by people with lived experience, coming together with communities and service providers to co produce the next stage of our work and develop the approach.

The Musselburgh Meeting Centre: What next?

In April we got together to plan a new session for the Musselburgh Meeting Centre.

Our Perfect Day: A place..

- to be me ' –our own place 'at the heart of the community with a kitchen, garden and outside space
- to be with people in the same boat – peers – for friendship and mutual support to manage life with dementia from people who know dementia from the inside
- to find meaning & purpose – where people living with dementia and carers can do the things that matter and are meaningful to them, accessing a range of quality activities and support in the Centre and wider community
- to be in control – where Members plan and run the Centre
- to be respected and connected – where people are respected and connected members of the community
- to get the support I need when I need it – a resource and support for people living with dementia, carers, families and friends of all ages
- to challenge stigma – that promotes understanding, challenges stigma and promotes brain health now and for future generations.
- to live and not just exist – that helps people with dementia and care-partners live well and manage life with dementia, including planning ahead beyond the Meeting Centre

The Meeting Centre Approach - a view from the inside

In the summer, Meeting Centre members organised an event that told the story of the Musselburgh Meeting Centre from the inside. Members designed and led the event working over several weeks to plan and practice for the day. Members presented their 'Recipe for the

Musselburgh Meeting Centre" and poems that demonstrated what the Centre means to them and the difference it makes. The event was a great success:

"... everybody [at the Meeting Centre] gets on very well with each other, everyone cares about each other. If any of the Members are feeling not so well or don't come, the next time you see them you're asking how are you feeling today? And it's good to see them when they're back. Things like that. [It's a] really very friendly place and everyone cares for each other very much." Elizabeth, Meeting Centre

"The Centre has a space for carers to get together. This is important. [Being a carer] can be traumatic. It's important to have time to listen to each other. When we get together we have lots to say. Thank you for that, I particularly value it. Thanks to Carers of East Lothian and Anne from Open Arms Carers." John, Meeting Centre

"Musselburgh Area Partnership has been involved right at the start and we see the Meeting Centre as part of our community. There are members of the Area Partnership here. The question is, is there anything else you would like to see us doing? What do you think would make a difference? We'd also like you to help develop our Area Plan, to give us some action points. We would love to support you." Janice, Musselburgh Health and WellBeing Group

Nourishing Our Neurons: DFEL Gathering on Brain Health

In November, we held our annual Gatherings with a focus on Brain Health. We were delighted to welcome Professor Alan Gow to talk about how thinking changes over time. Alan told us how we tend to focus on memory problems more as we age, but we have many different thinking skills and all of them are affected by ageing in different ways. Living day to day also relies on the skills and experience we acquire as we go through life. Older people may drive slower than young people but have experience to anticipate and handle problems. This counter-balances slower reaction times.

So how to look after our brains? Alan says we should choose activities that are meaningful to us, bring us pleasure and make our lives better. We spent the rest of the day in our 'Happy Brains Workshops' exploring different activities that are good for brain, body and soul, including playing with colour, gardening, organising a dance project and creating a model of a happy brain.

Strictly Seniors

We partnered with Queen Margaret University to develop a local dance project and event in Musselburgh. We held weekly drop ins between November and June for anyone interested in Brain Health. Around 15 people came along to a session which evolved into a community

event at the Hollies Community Hub where people from across the community were invited to attend an afternoon of dance, music and poetry. The performers worked with QMU lecturers from Performing Arts and Psychology to design and perform for local people from the Hollies Lunch Club and Meeting Centre. The event was great fun and raised funds for the Hollies.

Developing the Meeting Centre Approach in Haddington

We held community conversations about dementia and the Meeting Centre approach in Haddington in November 2024 and January 2025. In November Graham Galloway joined us and Members from the Musselburgh Meeting Centre with people from across the Haddington and Lammermuir Area to talk about the Meeting Centre approach and community views on brain health. There was interest in following up the conversation and we met again in January 2025.

There was a strong focus on brain health, shifting from a deficit approach to dementia to a positive focus on brain health – it's transformational and lights a spark. We wanted to organise a brain health event/initiative to widen the conversation across the community, improve communication channels to share information about available support and activities – eg What's On and explore ways to make existing community spaces more dementia-friendly and inclusive. We acted to engage healthcare providers like GPs and pharmacists as key partners. The next stage is to talk with local organisations about how we put these ideas into action.

Developing the Meeting Centre approach in Prestonpans

We have worked closely with Prestonpans Community Centre and Alzheimer Scotland to develop dementia -specific support in Prestonpans Community Centre. Alzheimer Scotland has set up a Dementia Cafe at the Centre and the Centre has also developed a dementia inclusive weekly drop in coffee club - Chatterbox. The Friendship Group has also visited the Prestonpans Community Centre several times. This included a joint session with the Centre team and Management committee to talk about dementia and support their work. When the D Cafe was set up we agreed it might be confusing to set up a new Friendship Group at the time and agreed to keep things under review.

What's going well?

The Musselburgh Meeting Centre is up and running and changing lives and demonstrating the benefits of the Meeting Centre approach. We are running 4 sessions, facilitating 4 groups for 35 people living with dementia, 33 care-partners and 19 friends. Some members and carers

have been with us 2.5 years and we continually how we work and organise to ensure everyone has a great experience.

Members and carers have friends, activities that are meaningful to them and are fun and people have strong positive connections with peers, the community and opportunities to exercise rights to influence decisions and participate in the life of the community and families.

The Centre team have grown in skills and confidence and embraced new groups and approaches with skill and enthusiasm. They have helped to create the Centre as a well known and loved part of the community with deep connections across the ages and groups.

The Development project has enabled us to develop and demonstrate key practice and principles round co production, experts by experience and assets based community development, applying learning to new areas and communities. It has also enabled us to explore how conversations about Brain Health shift to inclusive conversations about hope.

Challenges & Opportunities

There are of course challenges and opportunities for the Musselburgh Meeting Centre and Meeting Centre approach now and for the rest of the development project and beyond.

Who comes - is a key question when setting up a Meeting Centre. Our original plan was to build on the success of the Friendship Groups where we formed a relationship with people at that critical stage during the diagnosis process via working with OTs on the 'Memory Course'. The 'referral pathway' was changed removing this option but we did get referrals from Alzheimers Scotland Link Workers and Community Mental Health Team colleagues.

We found that members joining us via this route often had more advanced dementia, partly linked to the lack of a Day Centre in Musselburgh. This and a funding requirement to only invite Members who live in Musselburgh made it hard to find members for the Tuesday Group.

The Tuesday Group became open to anyone and that enabled us people to connect with us via word of mouth and we could engage with the D Cafe members who come from a range of areas. The importance of being able to say to someone in need 'just pop in tomorrow for a chat' has helped us connect with people when they are ready. That isn't possible in groups that need to be smaller and more structured like Monday and Friday,

How people get to the Meeting Centre - when we started members got to the under their own steam, many walking. That has changed and transport is now essential to many

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members getting along. This takes time, finances and skilled support and has been a struggle as we were designed not to do this.

The importance of a local pathway- the lack of a Day Centre in Musselburgh has meant that there has been no clear 'pathway' for people who need more support than we can provide. Whilst we cannot provide personal care, we have adapted our practice and opening hours to ensure members and carers are supported and have the best experience we can provide. Over time people need more 1:1 working, to be in smaller groups and a more carefully designed environment to ensure everyone participates. Team members need more training. The changes link more to sensory impairments and mobility than dementia and these affect carers as much as people living with dementia.

Looking to the future

In April 2026, the Musselburgh Meeting Centre will move from DFEL to become part of a new integrated Meeting and Day Centre. This will be run by John Bellany Day Centre. The next year will focus on supporting that transition for members, carers and the team. We expect the change to be seamless, with minimal impact on members and the team, as the new service starts up.

The New Integrated Meeting & Day Centre offers opportunities to support people at different stages, connecting people with care service support and outreach as they need it and later on transport and greater levels of support. Providing that seamless support can transform the experience for members and care partners.

There are risks round ensuring the integrity of the Meeting Centre approach, in particular promoting agency and managing risk round enabling people to retain and develop every day skills like shopping and cooking and members leading activities and trips, not just choosing. However, Day Centre and Meeting Centres share a focus on person centred care, cognitive stimulation and

psychomotor therapy. They both have strong community links and connections. So there are many benefits for sharing practice and evidence.

The Community of Learning and Practice and developing the Meeting Centre approach in other areas will deepen our understanding of how the model works and help to share ideas and learning. Links with Meeting Centre Scotland will help keep the approach alive and thriving in East Lothian.

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Looking to the future

The next year will involve a lot of change. The Meeting Centre is built on strong foundations and new manager April Govan will take the team and members into the new integrated centre from April 2026. Our aim is that members continue to have the quality of experience they have already and the change is seamless for them and the team. Development work in Haddington will continue to take forward the conversation about Brain Health and gaps in current support that a meeting centre approach could help fill.

The Community of Practice will continue with work on evaluating our impact and telling the many stories of the Meeting Centre experience and we will bring all the work together in a final Gathering in April 2026.

Towards the end of next year, the Directors will review the work DFEL has done and whether there is more we can do, or if it time for others to take on the role

Thank yous

We are very grateful to many people including Members, carers, the team and DFEL's Board for coming together to make our work happen - we all have a contribution to make. We also want to thank East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership who fund the Musselburgh Meeting Centre and Development Project Grant and provide so much more than money. ELHSCP Chair Shamin Akhtar has opened events and, with Christine and Maria, has spent time with members and carers demonstrating their support in a very practical way. Leslie Milton and the congregation of St Andrew's High Church have given us a home and a base for what we do and Musselburgh Area Partnership have been alongside us from the start.

Other thank-yous to Ellie and pupils at Musselburgh Grammar School, Betty and Kitty at the Musselburgh Museum, Debbie and team at the Hollies and Gayle, Alister and Janice at Musselburgh Area Partnership. And many more.

In Conclusion

It's been a productive year and we end with a lot in place and ready to meet our final year of funding. A lot of good things have been created by a small group of people with a lot of passion and a lot of friends to help us on our way.

Dr Sue Northrop, AFBPSs, MSc Dementia Studies (Stirling)
CEO/Founding Director
Dementia Friendly East Lothian CIC

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PART 2 – CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS – Please indicate who the company's stakeholders are; how the stakeholders have been consulted and what action, if any, has the company taken in response to feedback from its consultations? If there has been no consultation, this should be made clear.

The stakeholders are the people in East Lothian living with dementia as people with dementia and unpaid carers/supporters; families and friends, the wider community and the professionals and funders supporting the work we do. Our priorities are developed in partnership with people with dementia, carers and the wider community.

The consultations made with stakeholders are discussed in the previous section.

PART 3 – DIRECTORS' REMUNERATION – if you have provided full details in your accounts you need not reproduce it here. Please clearly identify the information within the accounts and confirm that, "There were no other transactions or arrangements in connection with the remuneration of directors, or compensation for director's loss of office, which require to be disclosed" (See example with full notes). If no remuneration was received you must state that "no remuneration was received" below.

The aggregate amount of emoluments paid to or receivable by all directors in respect of qualifying services was £16,492.

There were no other transactions or arrangements in connection with the remuneration of directors, or compensation for director's loss of office, which require to be disclosed

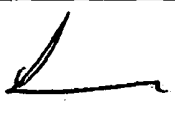
PART 4 – TRANSFERS OF ASSETS OTHER THAN FOR FULL CONSIDERATION – Please insert full details of any transfers of assets other than for full consideration e.g. Donations to outside bodies. If this does not apply you must state that "no transfer of assets other than for full consideration has been made" below.

No transfer of assets other than for full consideration has been made

PART 5 – SIGNATORY

The original report must be signed by a director or secretary of the company

Signed



Date

19 Dec 25

Office held – Director

You do not have to give any contact information in the box opposite but if you do, it will help the Registrar of Companies to contact you if there is a query on the form. The contact information that you give will be visible to searchers of the public record.

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