





Sandwell Community Dementia Service SCDS News





















Who we are:

SCDS NEWS is the newsletter of the Sandwell Community Dementia Service, offering free advice, information, and support to individuals concerned about their memory and those living with dementia in Sandwell.

Our service is a partnership of eight local voluntary sector organisations, working together to support individuals and families at every stage of the dementia journey. We provide training, raise awareness, and help create Dementia Friendly Communities across Sandwell.

Whether you are living with dementia, caring for someone, or seeking guidance, SCDS is here to support you every step of the way.

We are here for you: **(4)** 01902 826 655

murrayhall.co.uk/SCDS



Building Confidence

Florence (Floss) was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in February 2025. This diagnosis completely destroyed her confidence, and she became very anxious, withdrawing from the things she once loved.

Floss then met Dementia Navigator, Sandra, and life began to change for her and her loving, supportive family. Sandra supported Floss and her family in coming to terms with the diagnosis and recommended simple changes that could help Floss live well with it. Through thoughtful interaction and empathy, Sandra gained Floss's trust, and her confidence slowly began to return.



Image: Floss and Sandra showcasing Floss's embroidery

Floss loves embroidery and is very talented at it, but she had lost interest since her diagnosis. Sandra encouraged her to complete the embroidery project she had started, promising that once it was finished, she would display it in the dementia office next to her desk. Sandra also introduced Floss to the art group at Murray Hall. Although the group is not specifically for those living with dementia, it offers a friendly and welcoming environment.

It took a lot of reassurance from her children to get Floss to attend, as she was extremely nervous about going. On her arrival, Sandra was there to greet her, and together they enjoyed creating a diamond art project. Floss expressed, "My friend Sandra makes me feel calm. I can't explain what it is — she just understands me, and I know I can talk to her. She listens to me."

Over the following weeks, Sandra gradually began to leave Floss in the group for longer periods of time. Slowly, she gained confidence and became less anxious. Once she had completed her embroidery project at home,

Floss's daughter presented it to Sandra, framed and signed by Floss. It was an emotional moment for Sandra, as her tender care and support had been instrumental in helping Floss re-engage and build new friendships. Sandra invited Floss and her daughter to visit the dementia office to see her beautiful embroidery proudly on display next to Sandra's desk.



Image: Floss's embroidery hanging in the SCDS office.



Image: Floss and Sandra showcasing Floss's embroidery

Floss's son lan said: "Sandra provided us with more knowledge on how to handle ourselves better, to better communicate with Mom, and to know what to do and what not to do. The service has helped Mom regain her confidence and meet new friends – something we never expected to happen. From the initial diagnosis, it felt like everything was going downhill, then Sandra came along and the future looked brighter. On the mornings of the group, Mom is reluctant to leave the house, but when she comes home, she is full of confidence and it's all she talks about. We are surprised a group can have so much power. It really has given her something to look forward to."



Promoting Dementia Awareness within the Community

On Wednesday 17th September Sandwell Community Dementia Service had the pleasure of attending the Khushi South Asian Women's Community Group in West Bromwich to raise awareness around dementia. The group meets monthly and has 104 members from the age of 18+ with 40 members present for the talk. The group is a lifeline for the ladies, many of whom, were retired and living alone. In attendance from Sandwell Community Dementia Service were Helen Kennedy, Service Manager, Kanwaljit Kaur, Dementia Advisor for Oldbury, Lee Allen of Sandwell Community Dementia Service and Alzheimer's Society, one of the partners within the service, and we were joined by Gemma Langford, Public Health Development Officer for West Bromwich.

The group received a warm welcome from the moment we entered the room with one service user going to the Service Manager to thank us for attending and expressing how much the group were looking forward to our Dementia Awareness Session. She explained many of the ladies know someone living with dementia or who have concerns around their memory.

Lee delivered a very informative and lively talk raising awareness around about dementia and breaking down the stigma that surrounds it within the community. Explaining life continues when someone receives a diagnosis, the importance of receiving an early diagnosis, how to continue to live well with dementia and how to support and communicate with someone living with dementia.





The ladies kept Lee very busy with their questions:

- What is the difference between Alzheimer's and dementia?
- How can we prevent dementia?
- Why do people lose their most recent memories?
- Is stress an impact on dementia?
- Is dementia hereditary?
- Does it make a difference if you are vegan or vegetarian?

Following the dementia awareness session we were invited to stay and join in with the music, dancing and a lovely lunch. This gave further opportunity for the ladies to speak with us on a one to one basis regarding any concerns they had, advice and support they needed and once more they kept us on our toes. It was a great opportunity to engage and network with a group from one of our underserved communities – to help raise awareness and banish the stigma many associate with dementia.





Supporting Local Organisations and Promoting Dementia Awareness

Promoting Dementia Awareness and Dementia Friends is how we can help Sandwell become a dementia-friendly area, enabling those living with dementia to be better understood and supported, allowing them to live well with dementia and continue to be a part of their community.

Sandwell Community Dementia Service was invited by Bethan Roberts to The Hub on Wiltshire Way in September to deliver a Dementia Awareness Session to local residents. This was not the first time Sandwell Community Dementia Service had supported 4 Community Trust, and we were honoured to be invited back to speak with more of their local residents.

Lee Allen of Sandwell Community Dementia Service and Alzheimer's Society spoke openly about dementia, how we can support someone with dementia, how we can communicate about dementia and someone living with dementia, and how we can enable them to live well with dementia. This session was no different to previous sessions, with lots of questions from the residents and plenty of discussion taking place.

Feedback received from participants included:

- Very informative
- A lot of examples given
- · Provided lots of knowledge for a basic course

4 Community Trust is a local Sandwell-based charity with a focus on supporting their local community with a welcoming space Monday to Friday. Supporting all ages, they have a twice-weekly, vibrant and well-attended pantry, and deliver after-school clubs at schools in the local vicinity.

Volunteer Opportunities

If you would like to find out more about how you could volunteer with us to help provide dementia support, please contact Murray Hall Community Trust on:

Telephone: 01902 826 655 Email: info@murrayhall.co.uk

Have a story or an idea for the newsletter?

We'd love to hear it!

Email us on bcicb.dementiasupport@nhs.net



Sandwell Community Dementia Service Celebrates Jamaican Independence Day

Saturday, 8th August saw West Bromwich African Caribbean Resource Centre celebrate 63 years of Jamaican Independence with an all-day celebration. As well as celebrating Jamaica's 63 years of Independence, the aim was also to welcome the West Bromwich and surrounding communities to see what services are available at WBACRC, which include Sandwell Community Dementia Service.

The Jamaica Day celebration was a fantastic success with so many people and families from West Bromwich and the surrounding areas in attendance. Michelle Adologiogie, the SCDS Dementia Advisor for West Bromwich and Great Barr, said, "It was a great opportunity to interact with the community and speak about the service and how to live well with dementia. It was such a delight to see different people from the West Indian and Caribbean community approach the **Sandwell Community Dementia** stand, ask questions about the service we provide and want to know about dementia."

It is common practice within the Caribbean Community not to discuss with others what happens within the home environment and there are many stigmatising ideologies around dementia resulting in a reluctance to seek help or advice from others. Having such great attendance to the celebration event and great discussions surrounding dementia takes us a step closer to breaking down these barriers.



Image: Michelle Adologiogie pictured receiving donations from Island Patties of 100
Patties for Jamaican independence open day celebrations.



Image: SCDS Stand at Jamaica Day Celebrations.



WE SUPPORT!



WE OFFER PRACTICAL ADVICE



WE HELP PLAN FOR THE FUTURE!



WE LISTEN!



WE RAISE AWARENESS!



WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!



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Making a Referral to SCDS

Who can access the service?

Sandwell Community Dementia Service is free to access for people living in Sandwell, or who are registered with a Sandwell GP practice and are: Diagnosed with Dementia or people who are seeking a diagnosis.

Referring people to SCDS promises a range of benefits for both caregivers and people affected by dementia. Our service offers comprehensive support, offering tailored interventions that help ensure people live well with dementia. With a multidisciplinary team of support workers, including Dementia Navigators and Advisors, we ensure a holistic approach to address the complex needs of individuals living with dementia and their carers. By engaging with our service, SCDS professionals can seamlessly integrate their clients into a supportive community, fostering a continuum of care that significantly contributes to improved client outcomes and overall wellbeing.

How do I make a referral?

To make a referral, please contact the Single Point of Access by telephone or email. Our Dementia Navigators will triage new referrals and provide coordinated support alongside our Dementia Advisors to ensure the best possible care.