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**Old Library Trust**

**DEEDS - Dementia Engaged & Empowered Derry & Strabane**

**Impact Report**

**January 2022**

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# Section 1: Introduction and Context

## Introduction

This report sets out an Impact Study on Dementia Engaged & Empowered Derry & Strabane (DEEDS). DEEDS is a project managed and delivered by the Old Library Trust, supported by a £474,504 grant from National Lottery Community Fund.

DEEDS was designed to enable people living with dementia to live better for longer within their own communities and to progress the Derry City & Strabane District Council area as a Dementia friendly region.

This report sets out the impact of the project on its beneficiaries, carers, partner organisations and other stakeholders over the period 2018 to December 2021.

## Introduction to Old Library Trust

Established in 2001, the Old Library Trust (OLT) is a registered charity that provides services and activities to reduce health inequalities, address the underlying causes of poor health, and improve community health and wellbeing.

OLT primarily serves the community in the Creggan area of Derry, an area ranked as one of the most deprived areas in the North of Ireland, but also supports neighbouring areas across the Moor Ward and beyond. The organisation operates from and manages a Healthy Living Centre facility on Central Drive, which contains physical activity spaces, multi-functional meeting spaces, a community café, and rentable space that is used by services that complement the organisation’s work. More than 2,000 people per week attend the healthy living centre facility, participating in services and programmes aimed at reducing inequalities in health and tackling the root causes of ill health. Participants range from children and young people, parents, adults, and older people. All the services are underpinned by an aspiration to enhance health and wellbeing.

Throughout the years, the Old Library Trust has adopted a community development approach to engage people in health improvement initiatives, early year’s development, and community healing through partnership with statutory and voluntary service providers. An ethos of partnership and collaboration underpins OLT’s work. Through partnership with the Triax Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership, the Creggan community forum and the Healthy Living Centre Alliance, the OLT works to influence on the availability and delivery of services by statutory and voluntary service providers.

**1.3 Dementia Engaged & Empowered Derry & Strabane**

DEEDS is a 3-year project, originally designed to operate from 2018-2021, the project is aimed at people living with a diagnosis of mild stage dementia who live independently in the community with the support of families and friends. Due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and related underspends, the DEEDS project was awarded an extension year until 31st August 2022.

DEEDS delivers weekly activity groups, weekly memory groups, a 4-week education programme for carers of those living with dementia, and respite initiatives, as well as a programme of events and activities to reduce isolation and enhance emotional wellbeing.

The objectives of the DEEDS project include:

* To support at least 192 people living with dementia and a minimum of 120 carers over a 3-year period;
* To establish 6 memory/social clubs supporting 96 people with dementia to receive services and activities to support social, physical, and emotional wellbeing;
* To establish 6 activity clubs supporting 96 people with dementia to access weekly activities such as walking, cooking, arts & crafts, swimming, physical and cultural activities;
* To recruit, train, and support 32 volunteers to help facilitate weekly groups;
* To deliver a 4-week carers education programme to 120 carers, enabling them to connect, share experiences, and access services to enhance or maintain their emotional wellbeing;
* To support 120 people with dementia and 60 carers (total 180) to access 4 seasonal events per annum to reduce isolation and enhance emotional wellbeing;
* To support 120 people with dementia and 60 carers (total 180) to access an annual summer programme to reduce isolation and enhance emotional wellbeing.

## DEEDS Delivery Model

The Old Library Trust is the lead delivery partner for DEEDS who, supported by and in collaboration with a network of 5 other community and voluntary sector organisations, deliver the DEEDS project, connect with beneficiaries, and other service providers in the region. These organisations are Strabane District Caring Services; Learmount Community Centre; Hillcrest Trust; Caw Nelson Drive Action Group; and Shantallow Community Centre. The map below demonstrates the location of these organisations:

Map

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DEEDS is managed by a Full Time Project Coordinator and two part time support workers. Central to the delivery model is the role of volunteers who are recruited, trained and managed by the staff team to support the roll out of initiatives and activities.

Whilst the overall project is managed centrally by the OLT, each of the partner organisations are provided with an annual programme budget which enables them to pay specialist staff to facilitate weekly support sessions and groups. The OLT provides specialist oversight, develops the content of training and format of support and offers a constant advisory and supporting role to partners who use their local presence to support people in their respective communities.

# Section 2: Evaluation Methodology



## Introduction

The following sets out the methodology used to inform the impact report including approaches to data collection and analysis as well as some limitations impacting on findings.

## Data Collection

The evaluation adopted a mixed method approach to data collection and has been informed by the following activity:

* A reflective meeting with the project partners including OLT Healthy Living Centre; Strabane District Caring Services; Learmount Community Centre; Hillcrest House; Caw Nelson Drive Action Group; and Shantallow Community Centre. The meeting was facilitated by the OLT Programmes Manager.
* A desk review of project data including the application to the National Lottery Community Fund and project monitoring reports.
* 7 focus groups facilitated by DEEDS staff involving project participants across the 6 delivery sites. The focus of these sessions was on what participants liked and disliked about the project and what they would like to see changed or added.
* 1 focus group facilitated by DEEDS staff with 16 volunteers. The focus of this session was how volunteers benefitted from the project; how the project impacted them; and potential areas for improvement in future delivery.
* 2 interview and 2 focus group discussions with a total of 6 carers facilitated by the DEEDs staff. The focus of these sessions was how participants benefitted from the project; what the project did well; and potential areas for improvement in future delivery.
* 1 focus group discussion with the Steering group with a total of 5 representatives from other stakeholder organisations facilitated by the OLT Programmes Manager. The focus of this session was on how these organisations benefited from the project and the strengths and weaknesses of the project and its delivery and how it should evolve.

## Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis was conducted using both thematic and narrative approaches. Categories were developed, coded, and reduced. Thematic data from interviews was cross referenced to identify emergent themes and issues and to explore the relationships between issues. The process focused on generating wide ranging insights from partners and participants before transferring these to recommendations towards the end of the process. These recommendations were further tested through facilitated discussions with partners.

## Limitations

Efforts have been made to enhance the reliability and validity of findings through multiple method consultation. However, we note the following limitations:

* Evaluation approaches for people living with dementia can be challenging. Pre and post measures are unsuitable. The use of qualitative approaches involving both carers and participants was agreed to be the most appropriate way of capturing project impact.
* Consultations were carried out by the DEEDS staff team which may have affected the information provided by consultees. As a result, this information may be subject to both social desirability bias and investigator effects.

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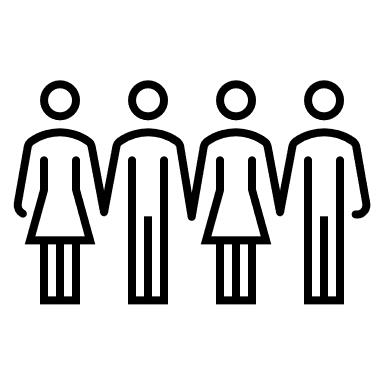
# Section 3: Key Achievements



## Introduction

This section sets out the key deliverables from the DEEDS project from 2018-2021.

## Key Achievements



**132**

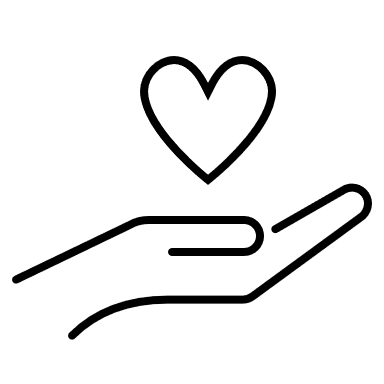
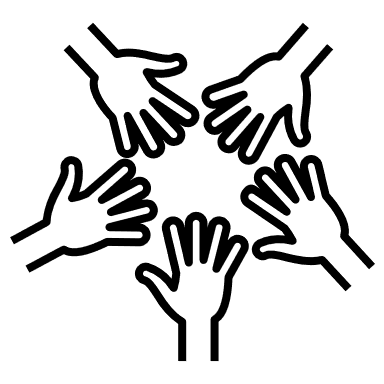
Total number of people with Dementia engaged in project

**253**

Total number of carers engaged in project

**34**

Total number volunteers across the project delivery



**85**

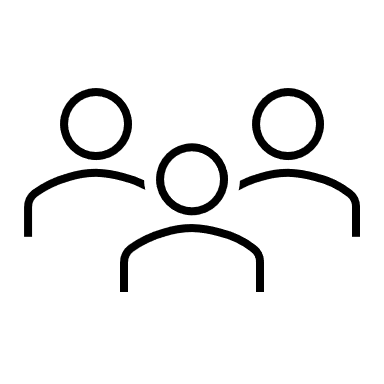
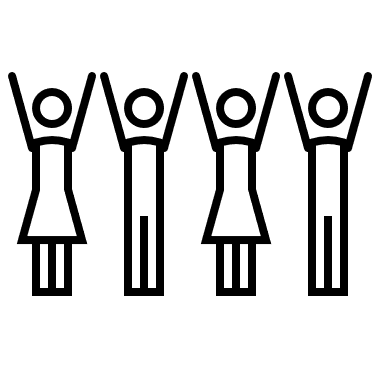
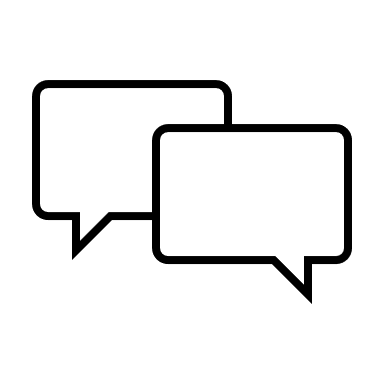
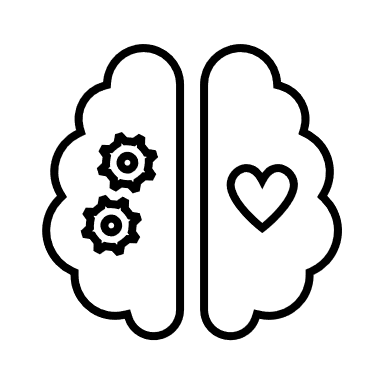
Members engaging in social/activity groups pre-COVID

**14**

Carers Connect beneficiaries with dementia

**33**

New members engaging as of January 2022

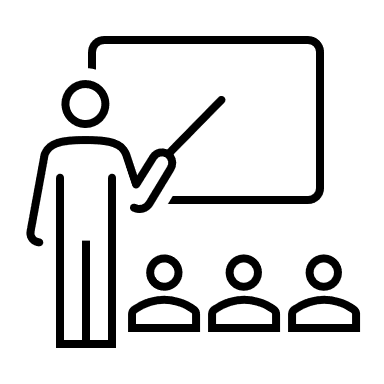


**45**

Total number of events/workshops delivered

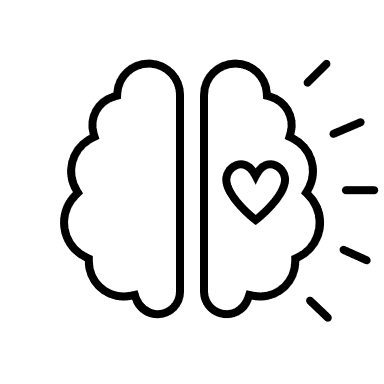
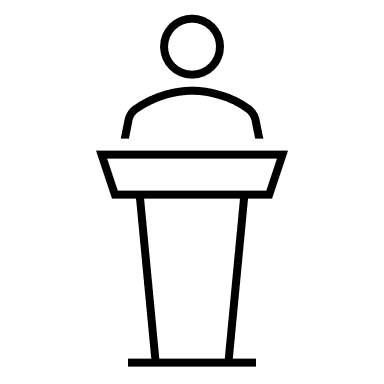
**7**

Volunteer training and celebration events with 108 attendances



**1,789**

Total attendances across dementia events/workshops

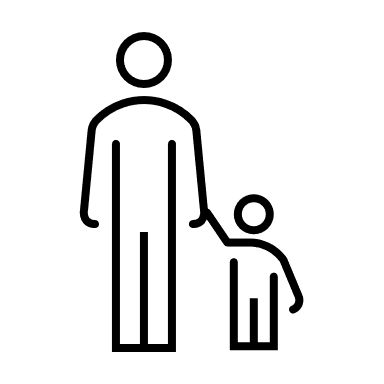


**314**

Total attendances across 5 Dementia Partner Events

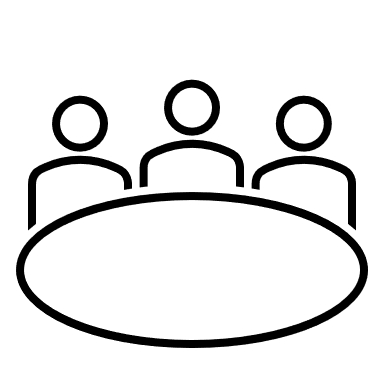
**64**

Total attendances at 2 intergenerational events



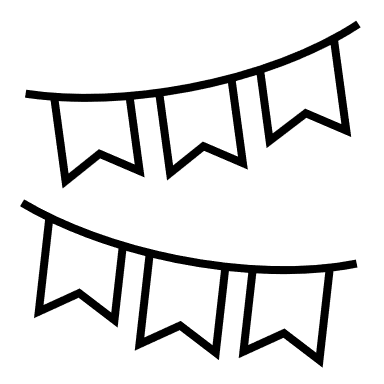
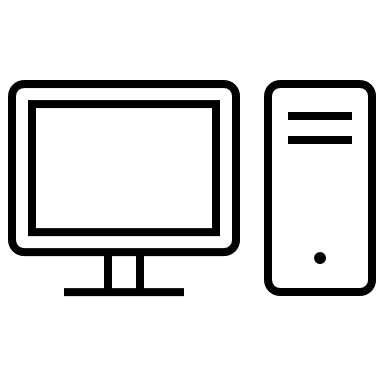
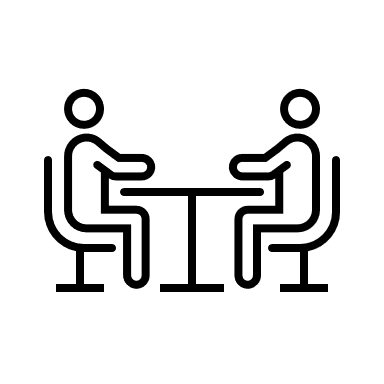
**9**

Carer’s education courses delivered with 137 attendances



**79,000**

People reached through the Social Media Programme



**43**

Total attendances at 3 Dementia Education Special Events

**618**

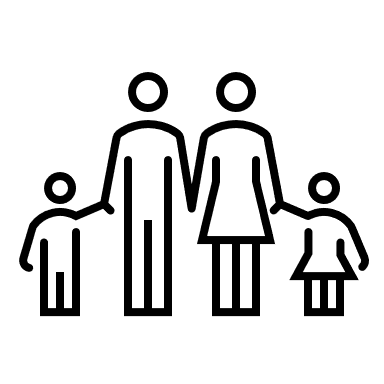
Total attendances across 12 Education & Training Workshops

**6**

Total social groups delivered, one in each project location

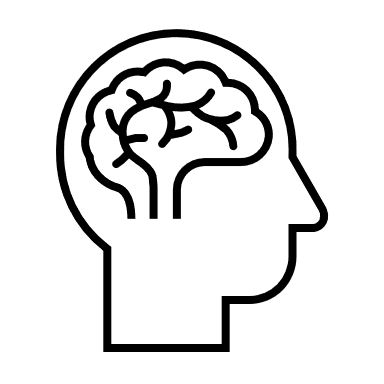
**4**

Activity groups delivered on specialized areas.



**486**

Total attendances across 5 large-scale Dementia Friendly Events



**40+**

Families reached through Doorstep Melodies with 12,000 viewing on social media

# Section 4: Impact of Project



## Introduction

This section examines the impact of the DEEDS project. The information in this section reflects a thematic analysis of the focus group sessions and interviews conducted with project participants, volunteers, and partner organisations.

## Impact on People with Dementia

The consultation revealed that the DEEDS project had a significant positive impact on people living with dementia. Companionship, socialisation, and the opportunity to meet new people were referenced consistently during the consultation as key positive impacts on participants, particularly those in rural areas. Some participants noted that the project gave them a sense of routine, something to look forward to, and a reason to leave the house.

*‘’It’s my reason to get up in the morning.’’* Focus Group Participant with Dementia

*“Mum won’t normally go anywhere without me or my brother because at least she knows there is someone to talk to. She went to DEEDS on her own though. It shows how her confidence has grown.”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

Consultations also repeatedly referenced increases in self-confidence and personal independence among those with dementia. This feedback referenced a cyclical relationship between the project and confidence, with attendance at the project increasing confidence, and increased confidence then resulting in an increased desire to attend. It was noted in consultations with participants with dementia that they enjoyed watching this development in their peers.

*“We get to watch the other members improve each week in front of our eyes.”* (Focus Group Participant with Dementia)

*“I notice a difference in her confidence coming out to the group. Like before she wouldn’t use her walker but then she saw that other people had mobility problems there – she uses it now.”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

*“DEEDS makes me feel that I have a voice and that I count as a person.”* Focus Group Participant with Dementia

The consultations highlighted how the DEEDS project normalises dementia and reduces the stigma attached to dementia and discussing it with others. Consultees noted how this allows the participants living with dementia to feel more in control of their situation.

*“She hears other people’s stories and knows she is not alone.”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

*“They laugh about dementia. They slag themselves off. DEEDS has allowed them to feel in control and comfortable in the group to do this.”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

Focus groups referenced the love, warmth, and respect with which participants with dementia are treated in the DEEDS project. This is true of not only staff but also other members. The consultees highlight how this environment has improved the mood of participants and provided opportunities for socialisation which helped reduce loneliness and isolation.

*“She calls it “the highlight” (of her week).”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

*“He loved the craic. I thought he wouldn’t go but he loved it. He’d be waiting on a Monday, ready and waiting early. He loved the chat.”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

## Impact on Carers

The consultation revealed that the DEEDS project had a significant positive impact on the carers. Consistent feedback from carers highlighted how seeing the improvement in those they care for resulted in confidence boosts for them. Confidence was also increased through carers education and the exchange of information with other carers on the project. Consultees commented on how the knowledge gained through participation on the DEEDS project is benefitting not only them but their wider family as they are able to communicate what they have learned to others.

*“I’ve learned to do things as we go along now – I know what to look out for. Through DEEDS I gained knowledge and found out so much from other carers too.”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

*“It helped me so much me knowing that he really wanted to attend.”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

*“I’ve been able to share the education with my sisters - it just came at the right time. We really enjoyed it and they have become really supportive of me. I’m more confident and now I have their understanding – that has all helped me.”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

Carers also noted how participation on the project has created an environment in which they feel supported in their carer role and provided an opportunity for them to build connections with the DEEDS project team.

*“We have a close connection with you at DEEDS and you are hands on and know the groups, so I feel very supported.”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

## Impact on Volunteers

The consultation revealed that the DEEDS project had a significant positive impact on project volunteers. Volunteers noted that their participation in the project had increased their confidence in their own abilities, enabled them to learn new skills, and improved their knowledge about dementia and how to interact with individuals affected by it. Specific reference was made to volunteer training, with volunteers highlighting that the quality of information provided was a key part of their volunteering preparation.

*“The Volunteer Training the first night was very beneficial.”* Volunteer Feedback

*“For me, what I enjoyed most about volunteering was learning new skills and the boost in confidence you get from helping people.”* Volunteer Feedback

Consistent reference was made to the social aspects of the project and how rewarding it felt to have to connect with participants and have a positive impact on carers and people living with dementia.

*“You feel good about yourself as you know you’re making them feel good.”* Volunteer Feedback

*“It’s rewarding making a difference to people’s lives.”* Volunteer Feedback

## Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic

At the beginning of 2020, with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the DEEDS project was forced to adapt mid-delivery to a new way of operating. This included a pivot to an online delivery method. The consultations highlighted that the DEEDS project adapted quickly and managed to continue despite the interruption of the pandemic whilst many other services stopped delivering. This allowed carers to have contact with the outside world when both restrictions and the threat of the virus to the health of those they care for necessitated that they stay at home. The success of the DEEDS project despite challenging circumstances was recognised by the Alzheimer’s Society’s annual Dementia Hero Award for Innovation which was awarded to the project in of 2021.

*“Even over lockdown with the zoom it was all very good. The exercise with Jonathan, the whole online programme. Other than participating in Carers Connect we didn’t see anybody, and it was the only contact we had with the outside world.”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

*“There was no sitting back, no furloughing. The project adapted and sustained. The only support people had for dementia was was through community, through DEEDS, and we knew what people needed.”* Partner Organisation Representative

## Strengths of Delivery Model

Those consulted were asked about the strengths of the DEEDS project and the delivery model, i.e., what are the things we could build on. One of the most frequently referenced strengths was the supportive and educative nature of the project. Carers reflected on how the support and advice they received boosted their confidence. They noted that their questions were always answered, even if it required a DEEDS team member to seek further information from elsewhere. Further, one consultee noted that the one-on-one element of Carers Connect allowed her to engage directly with a DEEDS team member who gave her their full attention.

*“Hearing other stories, you find that helpful, but one-to-one through Carers Connect was great as it gave me Wendy’s full attention.”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

The partner organisations also felt supported in their role in the DEEDS project as a result of the centralised source of information and leading role taken by the OLT Health Living Centre. These consultations highlighted the benefit of the training provided to partner organisations with the knowledge able to inform other areas of their work. It should also be highlighted that delivery model employed by the DEEDS project has been endorsed by the Integrated Care Partnership who highlight it as an example of good practice.

*“If we didn’t have DEEDS, we couldn’t do what you do – with your knowledge, assessment and the carers. We wouldn’t have the staff or capacity to deliver a service. There’s great consistency with DEEDS.”* Partner Organisation Representative

In line with the information and advice provided, carers also noted that the communication from the DEEDS project team was a key strength of the delivery model. Carers reflected that weekly calls from DEEDS project staff benefitted both them as carers, and also had a significant positive impact on the participants living with dementia.

*“You’re all so communicative. She loves the phone calls every week – it makes her feel important. She’ll remember that ‘Sinead called me today’. That contact and knowing you’ll call is very important. She actually waits on the call (now from the centre).”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

Project partner in referenced the benefit of the DEEDS project being delivered in multiple locations as it allows participants to access the project close to their homes. This was of particular benefit to those living in rural communities where little else is offered. It was noted that differences between urban and rural communities are appreciated and understood by the DEEDS project team.

*“There is great understanding of the rural area and the issues. The difference between rural and city is understood. It is great to have this in the project.”* Focus Group partner

*“Until DEEDS there was nothing out in the rural community. Long may it last. It is the best thing that happened around here.”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

Carers also discussed the success of the Carers Connect programme which they felt contained high-quality content and changed the way they viewed dementia. Carers reflected that Carers Connect facilitators did an excellent job in programme delivery and that the programme also highlighted the importance of caring for themselves, not just those they care for.

*“What’s the best thing I’ve learnt? To have fun again and to not take the diagnosis as bad. Life can still be the same.’’* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

*“Carers Connect went back to the relationship of father and daughter, not just carer and the person you care for. Caring isn’t just about physical needs; emotional needs are important too. The programme empowered me to take care of my own health as my dad. It let me the tools, skills, and a new perspective.”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

The consultations with participants with dementia revealed that these individuals felt the project strengths lay in giving them the opportunity to socialise and that the staff and volunteers were friendly and made a positive impact on their lives.

*“The project gives me the opportunity to talk to people with the same problems.”* Focus Group Participant with Dementia

*“The staff and volunteers are amazing to me.”* Focus Group Participant with Dementia

Other strengths of the project highlighted in the consultations were the activities; that participants are treated with warmth and respect; the taxi service which takes participants to the Centre; and the volunteers.

*“They are so well looked after. Years ago, the poor souls were just left and never bothered about. But with Carers Education and social groups – sure the workers just smothered us with love.”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

*“The volunteers – every single one of them. My son now volunteers and he loves it; the helping out, chatting, and making connections with them*.” Focus Group Participant (Carer)

## Weaknesses of Delivery Model

Consultation participants were also asked to consider any weaknesses of areas for improvement in the DEEDS project and its delivery model. Areas highlighted included:

* Attract more male members
* More male orientated activities like reminiscence work
* Increased delivery throughout the week and more time spent on sessions
* Shorter break over Christmas before reengagement
* Greater advertising of the project
* Support for volunteers

The consultations highlighted that not enough people know about the project. Carers pointed to how the benefit this project had for them could be extended to others. It was suggested that the DEEDs project should focus on advertising in a traditional way, away from the internet, as this is most accessible for the target group.

*“Maybe advertise more in the traditional way – I found advertisements in the doctors so maybe posters in health centres.”* Focus Group Participant (Carer)

*“We could do more promotion in our own community – just to get more participants.”* Partner Organisation Representative

It should also be noted that partners need to manage the extent of advertising as resources only allow for a limited number of supports in each community and partners are wary of generating a momentum and interest that cannot be sustained. The partner organisations highlighted a need for greater support for volunteers and recognition of the work they do. It was noted that on the occasions where participants on the project have passed away, volunteers have been heavily affected as they grow close to these participants. Volunteers may benefit from an extra layer of support at these times.

*“When someone does pass away, we maybe need some support for the volunteers. A wee zoom call to see how they feel because they do come in the next week, and they are sad. They do get attached to the members.”* Partner Organisation Representative

*“Going forward I would like to see more volunteer recognition (outside of volunteer week).”* Partner Organisation Representative

## Sustainability and Future Development

The final element of the consultations focused on the sustainability of the DEEDS project and the opportunities for future development. Consultations with those with dementia revealed several areas that participants would like to see DEEDS develop:

* More trips out including to the cinema, musicals, and Ulster American Folk Park
* Another Foyle Foodbank Sing to Support fundraiser
* Intergenerational sessions with younger children like pupils from the local area or Sure Start members in the HLC
* Dementia awareness training in the community in places where these participants visit such as the post office
* A memory book of each year as a keepsake for the group
* Art, woodworking, and gardening sessions
* Chair exercise, gentle yoga, and walks
* Information on dementia-friendly local places, businesses, and shops
* Sessions for participants to say goodbye or remember one another if someone is moving or has passed away

Carers frequently highlighted the need and opportunity for a pre-diagnosis support group for carers and participants in the first stages of their dementia journey. It was envisioned that this group would provide early information on what to do, who to speak to, and help people come to terms with their situation. One partner organisation suggested that in line with this, there should a one-off session in each area for members of the local community to attend for information on both the project and on dementia.

Another prominent suggestion from carers was on socialising opportunities for carers such as the creation of a private Facebook or Whatsapp group, a drop-in day, and a social group held quarterly to allow carers to come together.

There were also suggestions for the types of activities carers would like to see included. This included:

* Basic first aid for carers
* Self-care for carers and participants with dementia i.e., hair, facials, or nails
* Pet therapy
* More reminiscence and memory activities
* Information sessions on power of attorney, pension credit, and other benefits

In terms of sustainability, reference was made to the need to raise the profile of the project and the positive outcomes it produces through advertising and events. Suggestions included a conference held on what the DEEDS project is and what is available; and trying to attract letters of support from the Integrated Care Partnership in line with their endorsement of the DEEDS model. These activities could be beneficial when seeking funding in future.

## Case Studies



### Case Study 1

**Carer A’s mother attends the DEEDS project. He told us about her experience over the past few years and how the project has affected his family.**

“The DEEDS program has been really good for mum. Before she went, she was really down all the time. Her Alzheimer’s diagnosis came shortly after our father passed away and she was feeling the loneliness. Despite being initially anxious about going, now she looks forward to it every week. Mum loves the music and getting out and about to familiar locations.

I think the best thing about the DEEDS project is the communication from the staff. It’s excellent because mum lives alone and that helps her. The taxi service is also invaluable as it helps us to get mum organized without too much fuss.

We would love to see the DEED project being delivered a few more times a week and for longer. Just more of the project in general. We found that the break over Christmas and New Year was too long for mum, she would have needed more engagement.

The DEEDS project came at an important time for our family. We were starting to become desperate with trying to keep mum motivated to go on. Since we started engaging it has been brilliant, and mum’s mood has definitely improved. It would be a disgrace if the funding wasn’t continued or increased for this project. The impact is immeasurable, and the service is essential.”

### Case Study 2

**Participant B is a 73-year-old member of the Strabane social group who acts as a peer role model, caring for her fellow group members and acknowledging them as friends. Participant B has faced several health challenges and is living with a number of difficulties but is described as a ‘larger than life character’ and valued member of the Strabane social group. Participant B has been chosen by DEEDS staff as she embodies strength, a zest for life, and has a determination to have fun in the face of challenges.**

“Participant B is fiercely independent. She lives with her husband at home and has great support from her two daughters. Her journey started with a sudden stroke in 2001 where she developed a slope in the right side of her face and mouth and sight damage in her left eye. B persevered but a few years later suffered a heart attack. The distress of this has stayed with her and she recalls the paramedics working to save her. Following surgery to place stints in her heart, in 2016, B suffered another stroke, damaging the remaining sight in her left eye.

In 2018, B was referred to the GP when her daughter noticed her memory and behaviour were not as they usually were. She attended a memory clinic and underwent an MRI. She recalls the doctor calling her at home with the news. The MRI scan revealed that she suffered an additional five mini strokes. As a result, B was diagnosed with Vascular dementia.

Following a meeting with the Dementia Navigator, B was encouraged to attend the DEEDS social group in Strabane and reluctantly did. She explains that she was ‘’very weary at the start, but the Dementia Navigator saw that it was the one thing I was missing and said I would love it. And do you know what – she was right!’’

B attends the DEEDS group on a Tuesday, goes with her husband to shop for food on a Friday, and stays at home the rest of the week. She explains how group allows her to get out, keep moving, and try new things. B “amazes herself” when she accomplishes a task, piece of art or makes something with her poor sight.

B recalls how she loved her first day. She knew a few faces which helped, but she loves meeting new members, mixing, catching up on everybody’s news, and having tea and scone with other participants. She loves the bus, seeing the workers who are so good to her and always kind. She notes that the bus journey is great as its reassuring to know she can get to and from the group safely. B knows the group is on a Tuesday and is awake, showered, dressed, and waiting for the bus 15-20 minutes before it arrives for her at home. She says that the group ‘’helps by keeping my mind going, that is the main thing. If I don’t do this [attend the group] then this brain will slow down and stop. It means everything to me, and my husband gets a break from me too!’’

### Case Study 3

In the Summer of 2021, the success of the DEEDS project was acknowledged by the Alzheimer’s Society’s annual Dementia Hero Award for Innovation. The award recognised the challenges presented to the DEEDS project by the outbreak of COVID-19 and the related lockdown and highlighted how innovative delivery ensured that these difficult circumstances did not obstruct the support provided beneficiaries of the project.

*“Before lockdown, DEEDS operated at full capacity with their groups, education work and dementia friendly events. COVID meant they had to close their doors and find a new way of working. DEEDS developed a range of highly innovative and creative programming to continue to reach the needs of our members and their families, hitting the ground running from the second week of lockdown, including a phone service, Doorstep Melodies and Carers Connect.”*

* Alzheimer’s Society

# Section 5: Conclusions and Recommendations



## Introduction

This section sets out a summary of the impact report followed by a list of recommendations for the future delivery of the DEEDS project.

## Conclusions

This evaluation report has identified the following headline findings:

* The project achieved 5 of its 7 objectives
  + The project supported 132 people living with dementia. This is less than the target of 192. COVID-19 significantly impacted the projects potential to recruit new participants during this time. The project supported 253 carers, exceeding the target of 120 by 53%.
  + 6 memory/social clubs were established, meeting the target set.
  + 4 activity clubs were established, partially achieving the target of 6.
  + 34 total volunteers were recruited, trained, and supported to help facilitate weekly groups, exceeding the target of 32
  + 137 carers attended 1 of 9 carers education programmes, exceeding the target of 120 by 14%
  + 461 carers and people with dementia accessed 4 seasonal events, exceeding the target of 180 by 156%.
  + The 132 participants with dementia and 253 carers accessed memory/social and activity clubs as part of the annual social programme, exceeding the target of 180 by 113%.

The consultation findings, both quantitative (review of project deliverables) and qualitative outline a clear causal relationship between the inputs (i.e., funding, staff time, volunteer time and partners contribution) and outputs (i.e., support groups, training, social events etc.). The evidence suggests this would not have been achieved in the absence of the DEEDs project.

The project approach can be summarised as being communicative, educative, responsive to change, engaging, supportive, and aligned with the needs of people with dementia and their cares.

The findings indicate that inputs and outputs have resulted in:

* Increased confidence amongst people living with dementia and their carers
* Increased knowledge and understanding about dementia, its impact, and how to live well with dementia amongst participants, carers, businesses, schools and the local community
* Reduced social isolation and reduced loneliness amongst participants – particularly in rural areas
* Increased feeling of being supported amongst carers, enhancing resilience, and coping mechanisms
* Enhanced relationships between partner organisations and enhanced access to care related services in local communities
* Increased incidence of volunteering and increased wellbeing of those that volunteer
* Enhanced reputation, skills, and capacity of community and voluntary organisations that are delivering DEEDs
* Increased recognition of the role of the community & voluntary sector in delivering meaningful and impactful care related support (endorsement from Integrated Care Partnership)

The project was greatly enjoyed by both participants with dementia and their carers, particularly with regard to the opportunity to meet and socialise with people in similar situations; the provision of education and information; the Carers Connect programme; and the overall respectful and warm environment of the project. The project met the needs of the people it sought to engage and offers lessons in relation to future delivery of projects of a similar nature.

These outcomes align with the original intention for the project which was to enable people living with dementia to live better for longer within their own communities and to progress the Derry City & Strabane District Council area as a Dementia friendly region.

This enables a conclusion that DEEDS represents a positive investment in local communities. Given the success achieved across the majority of objectives in the DEEDS project, it can be concluded that the project made a positive contribution against its intended outcomes and was an important investment for addressing the needs of people living with dementia and their carers in the Derry and Strabane District Council area. There is sufficient evidence relating to the impact of the project to justify either a continuation or further development of the DEEDS project, taking account of key lessons, challenges, and suggestions for sustainability and future development.

## Recommendations



### Recommendation 1: Future Funding

The NLCF’s People and Communities funding programme ‘funds projects that work to make positive changes in their community – whether that’s a community living in the same area, or people with similar interests or life experiences.’ The programme provides funding between £10,001 to £500,000 to enable organisations to bring their projects to life.

Specifically, the People and Communities programme seeks to support projects that:

1. Help people make changes to improve their lives
2. Help communities build on their strengths and share things they’ve learned.

Projects should be:

* **People led** - NLCF believe that people understand what's needed in their communities better than anyone, so it’s important to involve the community in the design, development, and delivery of the activities you’re planning.
* **Strengths based** – NLCF want to support people and communities to build on the knowledge, skills, and experience they already have, to make the changes they want.
* **Connected –** NLCF want to ensure projects have a good understanding of other activities and services in their community. It’s therefore important to see how you’ll compliment these and add value to what’s already there.

There remains a clear alignment between the project and the People and Communities programme – and this evaluation and the consultations herein demonstrate significant engagement with the people that will benefit directly from the project. The evaluation identifies the key strengths of both the project, the participants, and the local communities and through partners, demonstrates a connected approach.

It is recommended that the Old Library Trust, alongside existing and potential new partners, should seek to secure additional funding to enable an extension and future development of the DEEDs project.

The following recommendations relate to the nature of a future funding proposal and the potential evolution of the delivery model. At its heart will be a focus on the long-term sustainability of the project beyond a future round of funding.

### Recommendation 2: Training and Capacity Building

In order to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project and the various supports in local communities, the Old Library Trust should ensure a clear focus on capacity building and training both within partner organisations, but also across local communities (businesses, schools, community organisations).

In addition, given the projects endorsement by the Integrated Care Partnership and its recognition through Alzheimer’s Society, the project should consider the development of accredited training and the exploration of social economy opportunities to help generate income to enhance the sustainability of elements of the project.

The current staffing resource does not enable a sufficient focus on training and thus OLT should consider the potential to develop a dedicated role.

### Recommendation 3: Expansion of Services

The network of 6 community and voluntary sector organisations currently delivering the DEEDS project have built considerable presence and awareness locally. These partners should be retained and supported to sustain their initiatives locally through ongoing programme budgets. The project should however examine the potential to expand the service into other areas across the WHSCT and connect with other organisations to facilitate this development. This may require an imaginative approach to programme budgets for partners with gradual reductions in existing partners to free up resources to support the integration of new partners and new areas to the project.

### Recommendation 4: Pre-Diagnosis Support

The consultation process has identified the need for the development of pre-diagnosis support groups to extend the benefits of the project to those on their first steps of the Dementia journey. The partners should consider how this provision could be embedded in a future delivery model or if this type of support could evolve under a new and complementary funded programme.