

Our journey started back in 2023. I started to get to know that there wasn't much going on in our community to help people and their families who were living with dementia or memory problems. We started doing a bit of research and came across Dementia Actif Gwynedd who at the time were running activities in towns that were quite a journey from our area. We contacted team members and arranged to get together to have a conversation about what was possible.

An agreement was reached to pilot sessions locally and we set about looking for a venue, creating posters and sharing our local contacts with the Dementia Active team.

A group of 4 people originally started with the group but today the membership has tripled.

Our ability to offer transport through our community transport scheme has helped people attend.

Our staff includes the driver who has completed Dementia Friends training, which means we have the ability to understand to support people and facilitate their access to the group.

'On Mondays the group is held and I love coming to work on Mondays, I get a good feeling coming to work and the thought of being part of a group really lifts my spirits.' (Llio Yr Orstation)

The individuals who attend the group are now very dear friends of each other. They didn't know each other before but today the friendship group has become a very important part of their lives. They wait for a cup of tea and a chat after the session and then go out for lunch with each other. It's a day that means so much and makes a big difference to their well-being. One of the attendees said....

'Coming into this group has helped me come out of a period of great depression and my life is a lot better now.'

The contact that the group has outside of the group time is something that has struck us, there is a sense of community between the members. There was a recent incident when one of the crew members was hospitalized. Everyone was busy making sure everything was in place for her when she got home and there was a rota between the group to keep her company through visits and phone calls.

Two of the people who attend are unpaid carers and attending the group is an opportunity for them to take a break and enjoy themselves.

'I feel so proud when I see the positive impact that being a group has had on the lives of the individuals, that it's a pleasure to see them enjoy each other's company and see them live their best lives.' (Greta The Station)

Through working with the Dementia Active team, together we have developed a very close relationship with the local primary school. We often hold activities there which are an opportunity for older people to discuss and play with the children. It is a very good experience for children as well, it is an opportunity for them to learn social skills, build confidence and have intergenerational contact.