
Rural Dementia Friendly Communities

Katherine Parkin

kate.parkin10@btinternet.com

Who am I?

- Katherine (Kate) Parkin
- Studying BSc (Hons) Psychology
- Completed my integrated placement year
- My parents have struggled caring for their Mothers in a rural area
- Attended the 2025 International and National Perspectives on Dementia conference



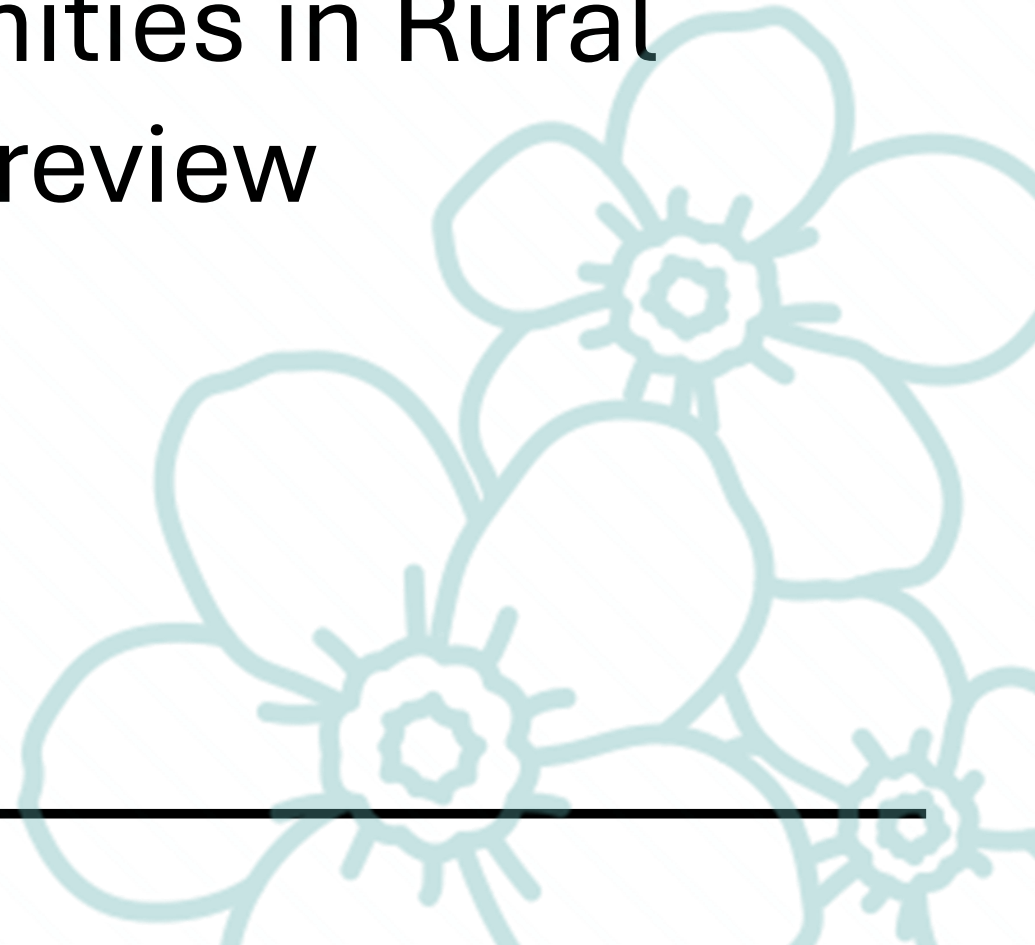
Overview

- Recent Research: Dementia Friendly Communities in Rural Settings in England: A desk review (September 2024 – May 2025)
- How Dementia Friendly Parishes Around the Yealm has positively impacted this research
- DFPAY satisfaction survey results
- Newbiggin-by-the-Sea survey
- Plans for the next academic year (September 2025 – April/May 2026)

Recent Research:

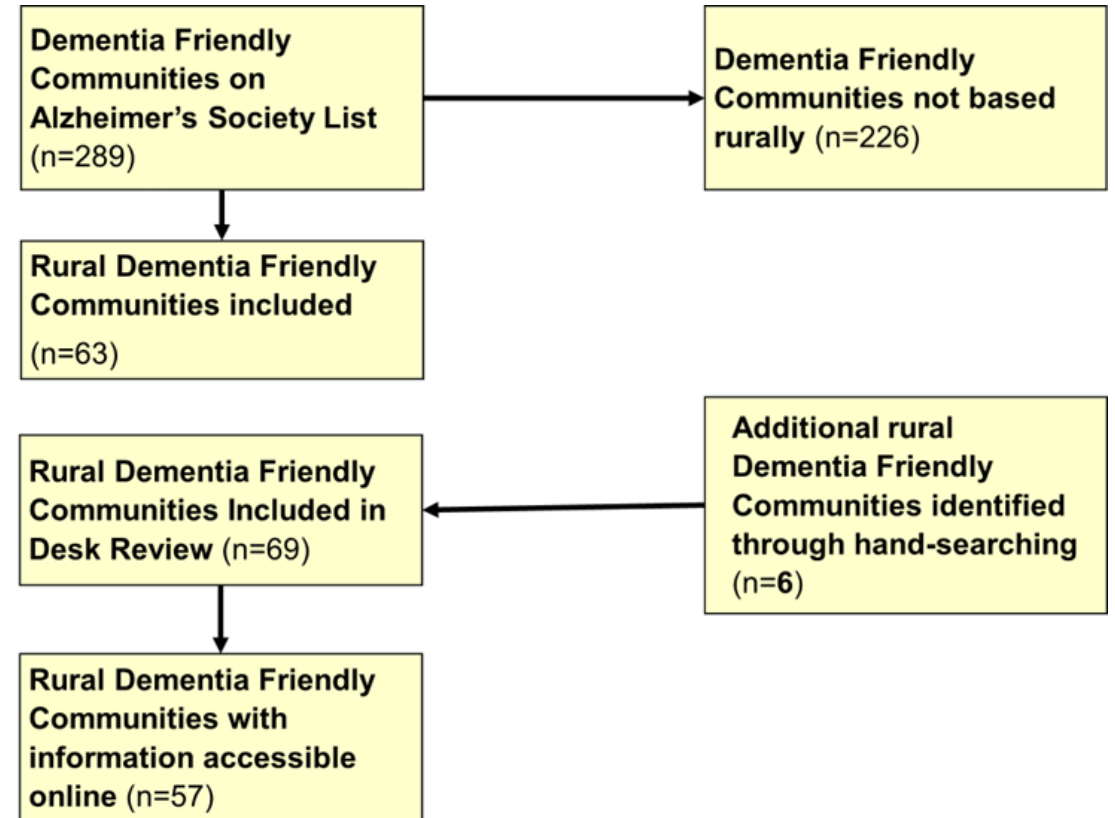
Dementia Friendly Communities in Rural Settings in England: A desk review

Research Duration: September 2024 – June 2025



Aims and Protocol

- What do rural DFCs in England look like?
- How are rural DFCs meeting the needs of rural community?
- We aimed to systematically identify and characterise rural DFCs in England
- These characteristics include DFC aims, activities delivered, resources and support received



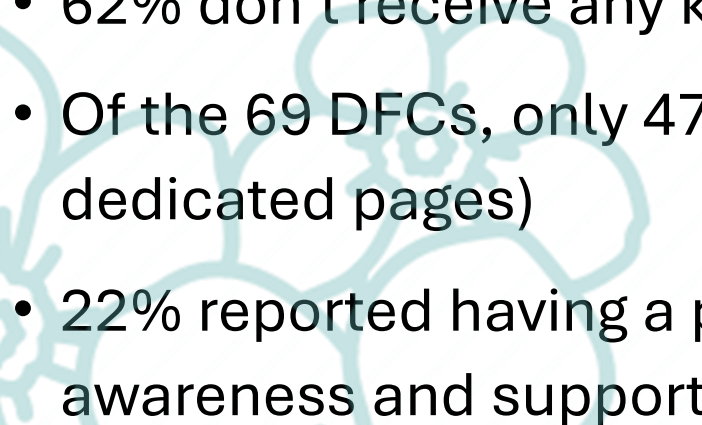
Total sample of 69 rural DFCs. However, only 57 DFCs had accessible information

Findings

- With the sample of 69 DFCs, we were able to observe how there isn't just one formula for success
- The distribution of rural DFCs is very uneven. Roughly 48% don't have one



Findings

- All reported to aim to raise awareness, reduce stigmas and isolation
 - Activities including exercise, singing, lunch, and walking groups
 - All are funded by donations
 - 62% don't receive any kind of political support (local or national)
 - Of the 69 DFCs, only 47% had an internet presence (e.g. website, FB page, or dedicated pages)
 - 22% reported having a partnership with local schools and police to help raise awareness and support those with dementia
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Dementia Friendly Parishes Around the Yealm (DFPAY)

- Allowed me to personally experience what a DFC is all about
- Set an excellent example for what DFCs across the country should look like
- Was a key reference point in my desk review to help better paint a picture



DFPAY Satisfaction Survey

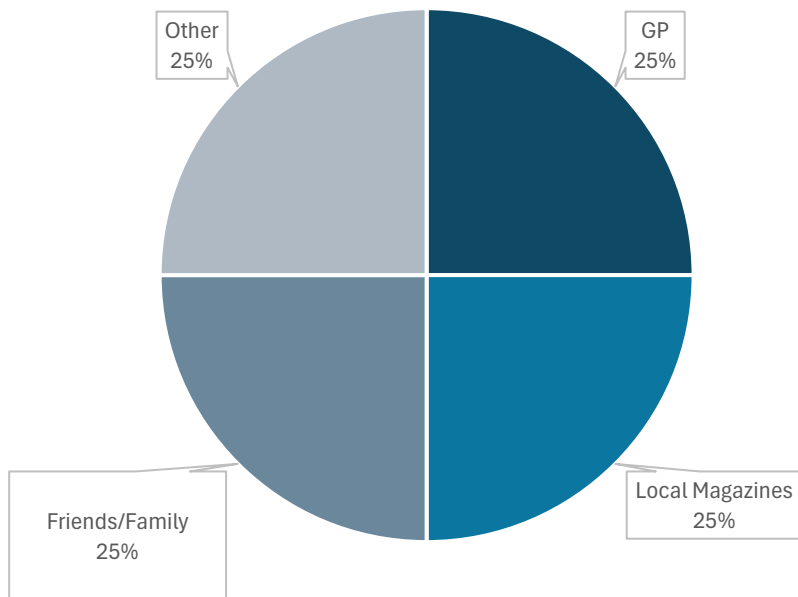
20 Participants

- 55% are/once were a relative or friend of someone with dementia
- 2 are living with dementia
- 65% of participants were aged 75-84 years old – total sample had ages from 65-85+
- 75% of participants were female

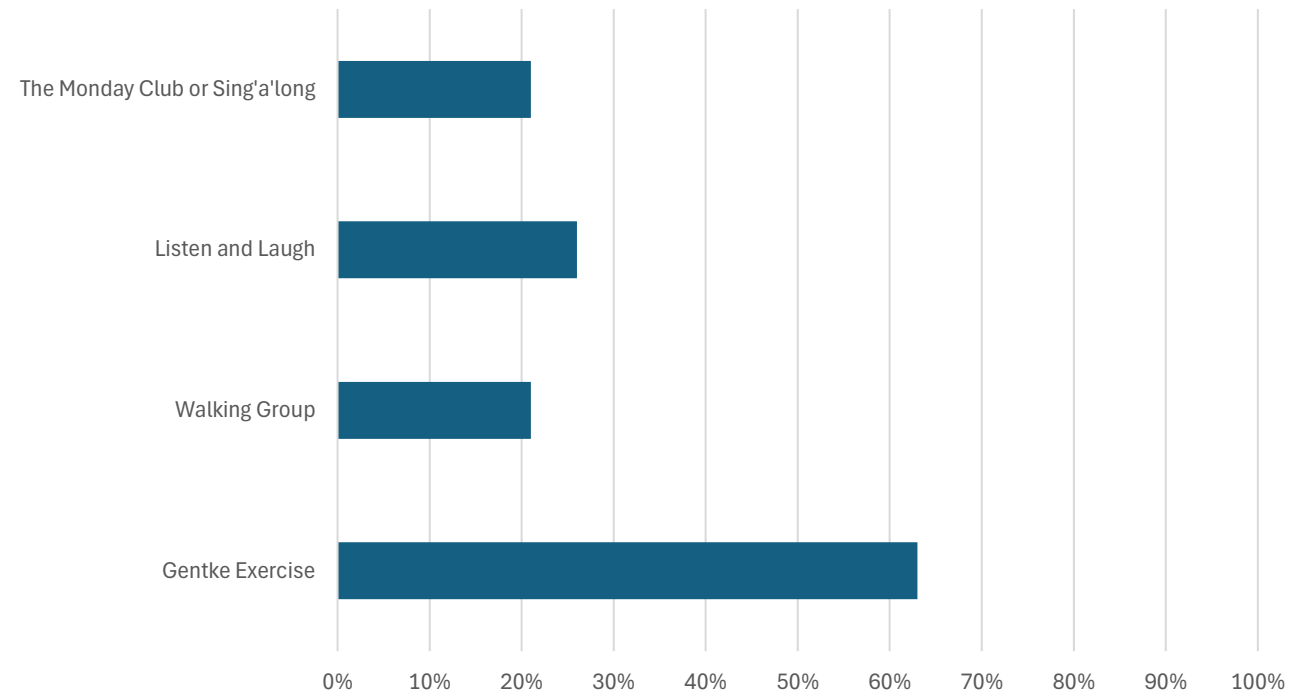


DFPAY Satisfaction Survey

How people discovered DFPAY

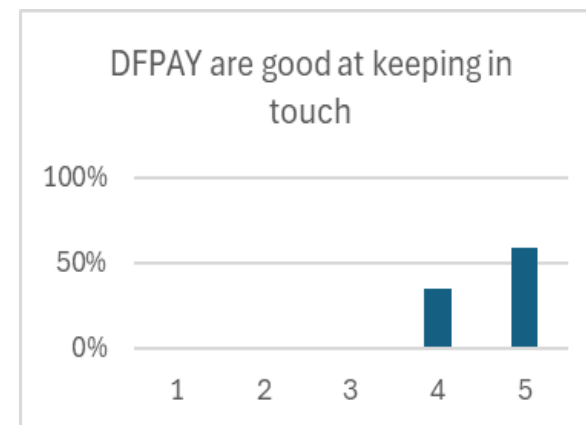
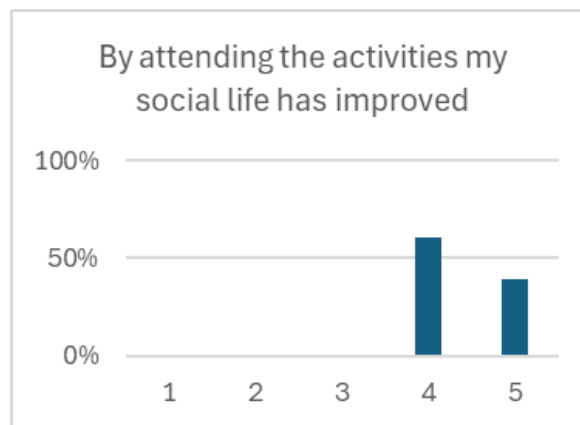
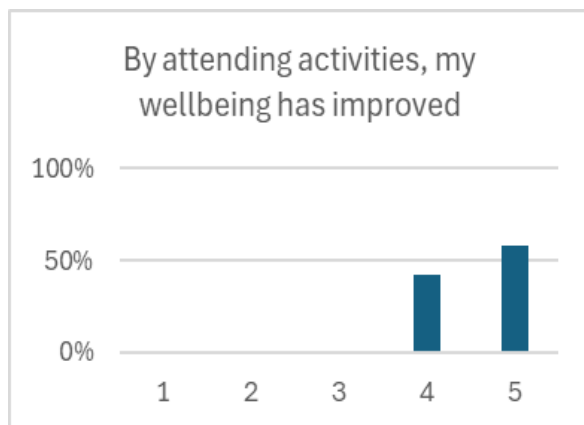
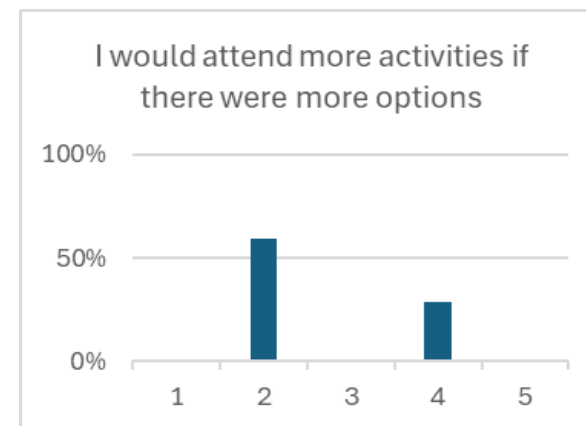
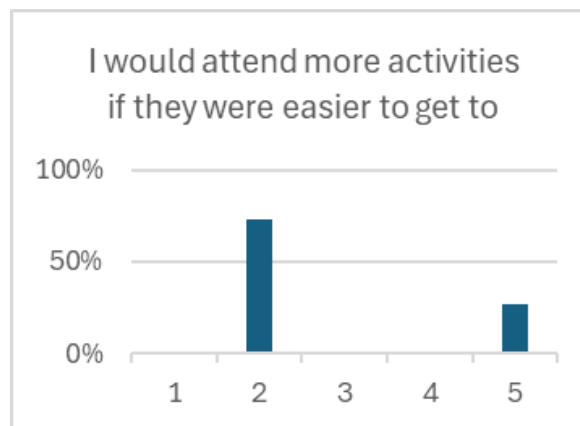
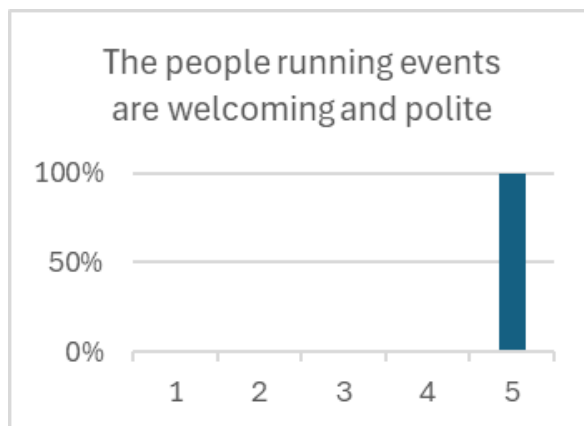


What activities people attend

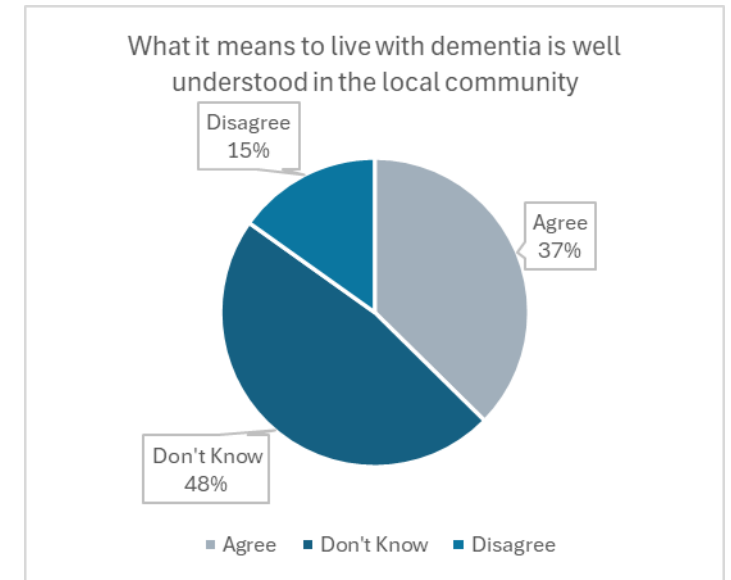
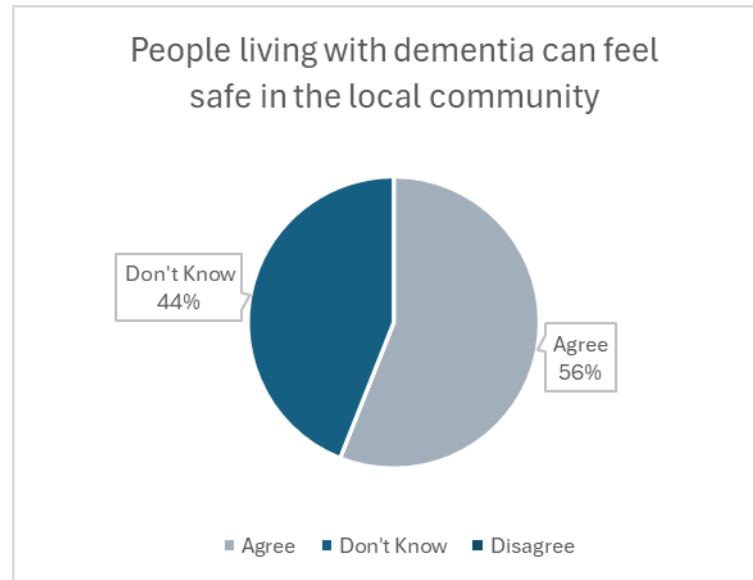
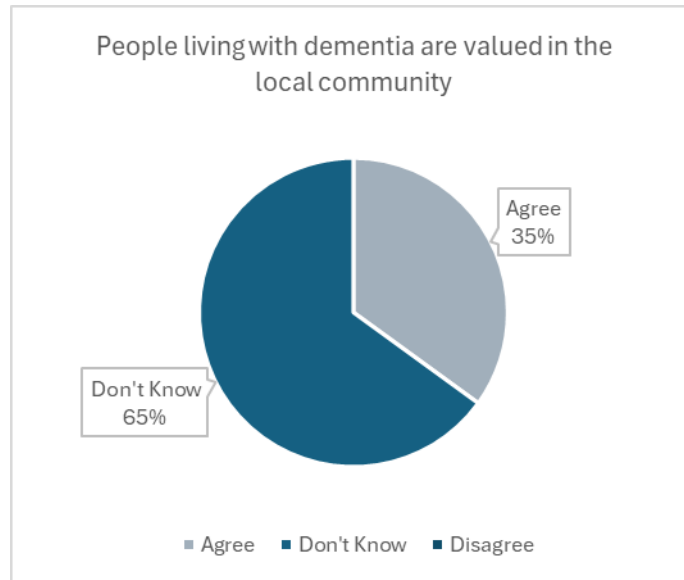


How the charity has benefitted individuals

1= Strongly Disagree; 5 = strongly agree



How the charity has impacted the general community



Overall Satisfaction and Feedback

- 100% felt all the aims of DFPAY were being met
- 95% were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied”
- 65% feel that members of the public still lack a level of understanding of what it’s like to live with dementia
- People can be impatient towards someone with dementia
- People should understand that someone with dementia thinks differently

Specific answers:

- Free parking at supermarkets is limited, making it challenging for accompanying someone with dementia
- Have leisure centres be more dementia friendly
- Better public transport
- Extra support in public places (e.g. shops, sports centres, etc.)

Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and Cramlington Survey

[Northumberland Gazette 2024](#)

- Two Dementia support groups run by the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS)
- Impact studies conducted by the charity over 3-6 months
- 81% of attendees with caring responsibilities noticed improvements in their loved ones
- 98% of caregivers attending said they too had benefitted

Positive changes in:

- Mood (63%),
- Appetite (19%),
- Attention (22%)
- Wellbeing (57%)

Plans for my final year dissertation

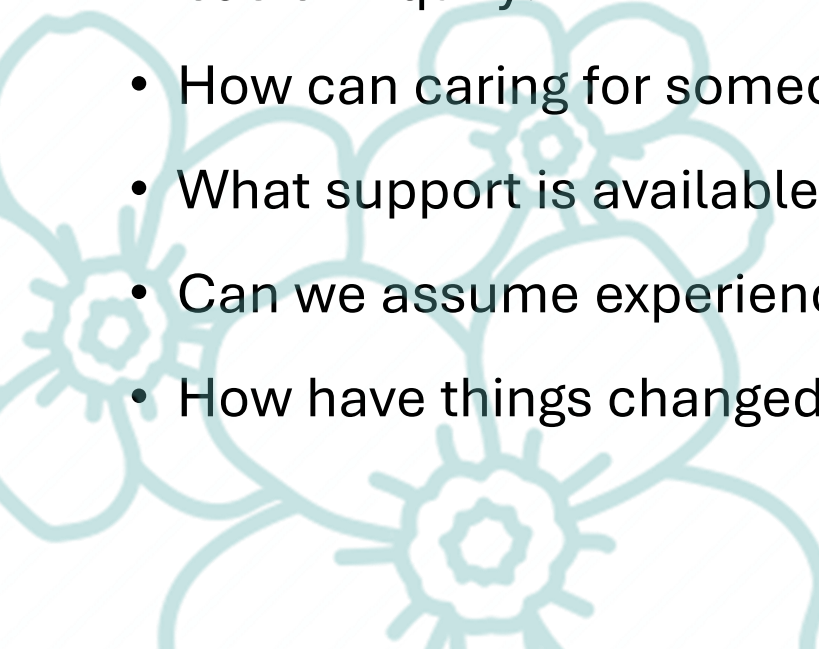
September 2025 – April/May 2026



Understanding Dementia Carer Support in Rural England

- Main Research Question: What does caring for someone with dementia in a rural area look like?

Areas of inquiry:

- How can caring for someone with dementia take a toll on a care givers mental wellbeing?
 - What support is available to carers in rural areas?
 - Can we assume experience better in an urban area?
 - How have things changed since the COVID-19 pandemic?
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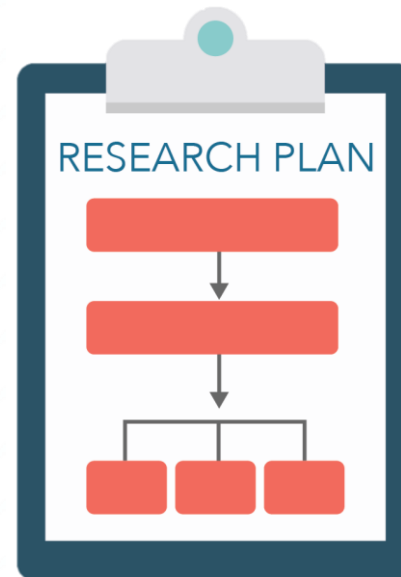
Potential Protocol

If I get Ethical approval from the Uni

- I will conduct a review on existing research and resources
- Look into interviewing carers (past and present) about their experience
- Maybe conduct surveys?

If I don't get ethical approval

- I will only be able to conduct a review
- The protocol will be very similar, if not the same, to what I have done this year



Potential Outcomes

- Newbiggin-by-the-Sea found 98% of carers benefitted from DFCs
- Gain a better idea of the extent being a carer of someone with dementia can take a toll on one's well-being
- Raise awareness on the importance of carer support – particularly in rural (more isolated) communities

Thank you for listening

Any Questions?

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