

Annual Dementia Evaluation

2024 - 2025



Service Overview

Royal Voluntary Service deliver activity and support groups with people living with dementia, their carers, family and friends. We currently deliver such groups in the following areas:

- Dundee
- Scottish Borders
- Northumberland
- Doncaster
- Staffordshire
- Leicestershire
- Birmingham
- Wales
- Kirklees
- Leeds
- West Sussex



From April 2024-March 2025, we supported around 1170 people at our groups, 742 who are living with dementia. Around 428 carers/family/friends have attended group with their loved one, while many others benefit from respite time utilising the time to take a break from their caring role.

To ensure our groups meet local need and our members preferences, wishes and goals, we seek regular feedback from our members. This report combines two evaluation pieces:

1. Annual anonymised feedback survey:

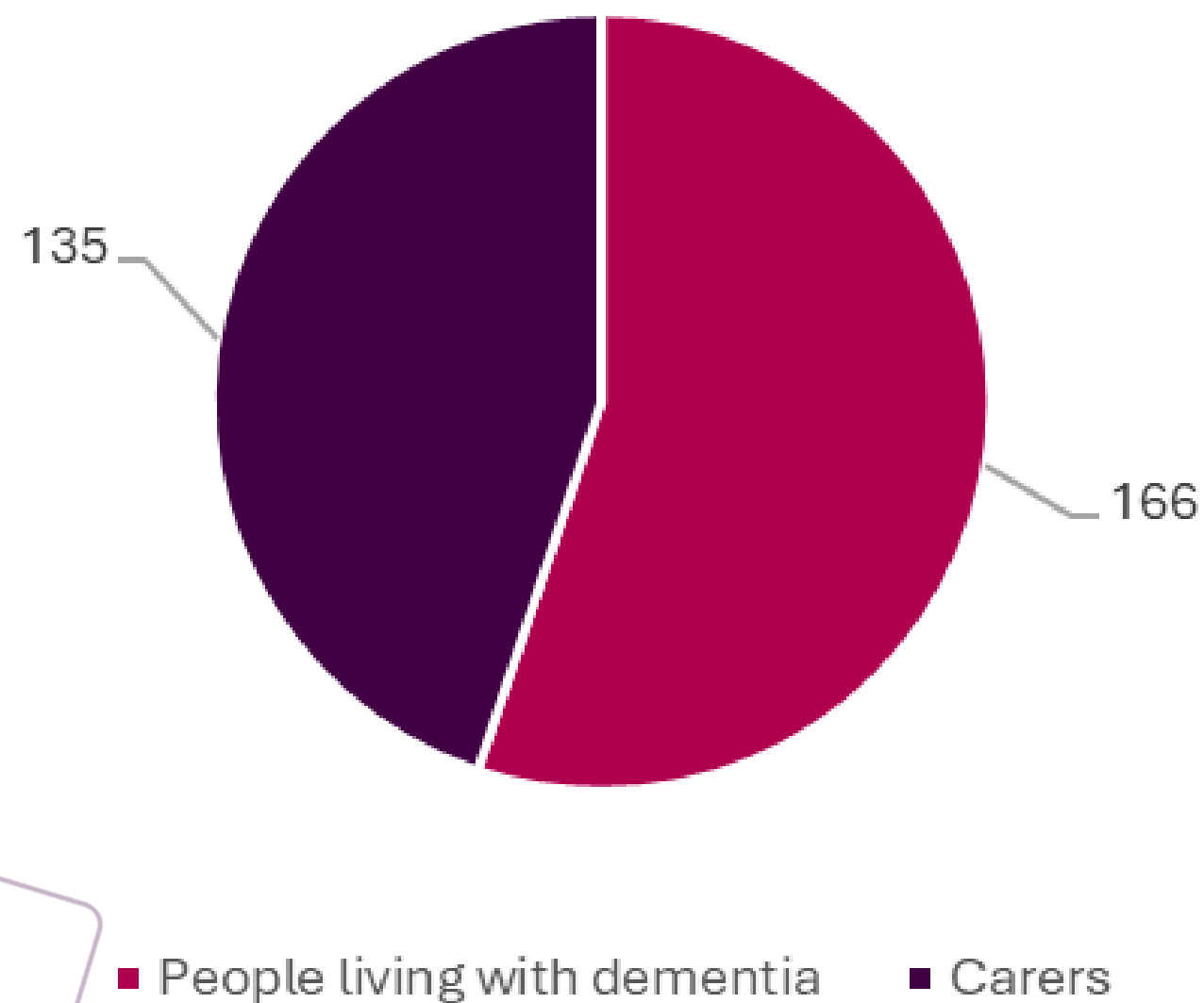
Surveys were offered to all our groups members and received 321 responses from both people living with dementia and/or their carers/family/friends, a response rate of approximately 72%. This survey did not include Leeds and Birmingham, due to changes in service provision at the time of data collection.

2. Baseline and follow-up surveys:

Completed with new members and then followed up 3-6 months after commencing service.

Responses

Breakdown of responses



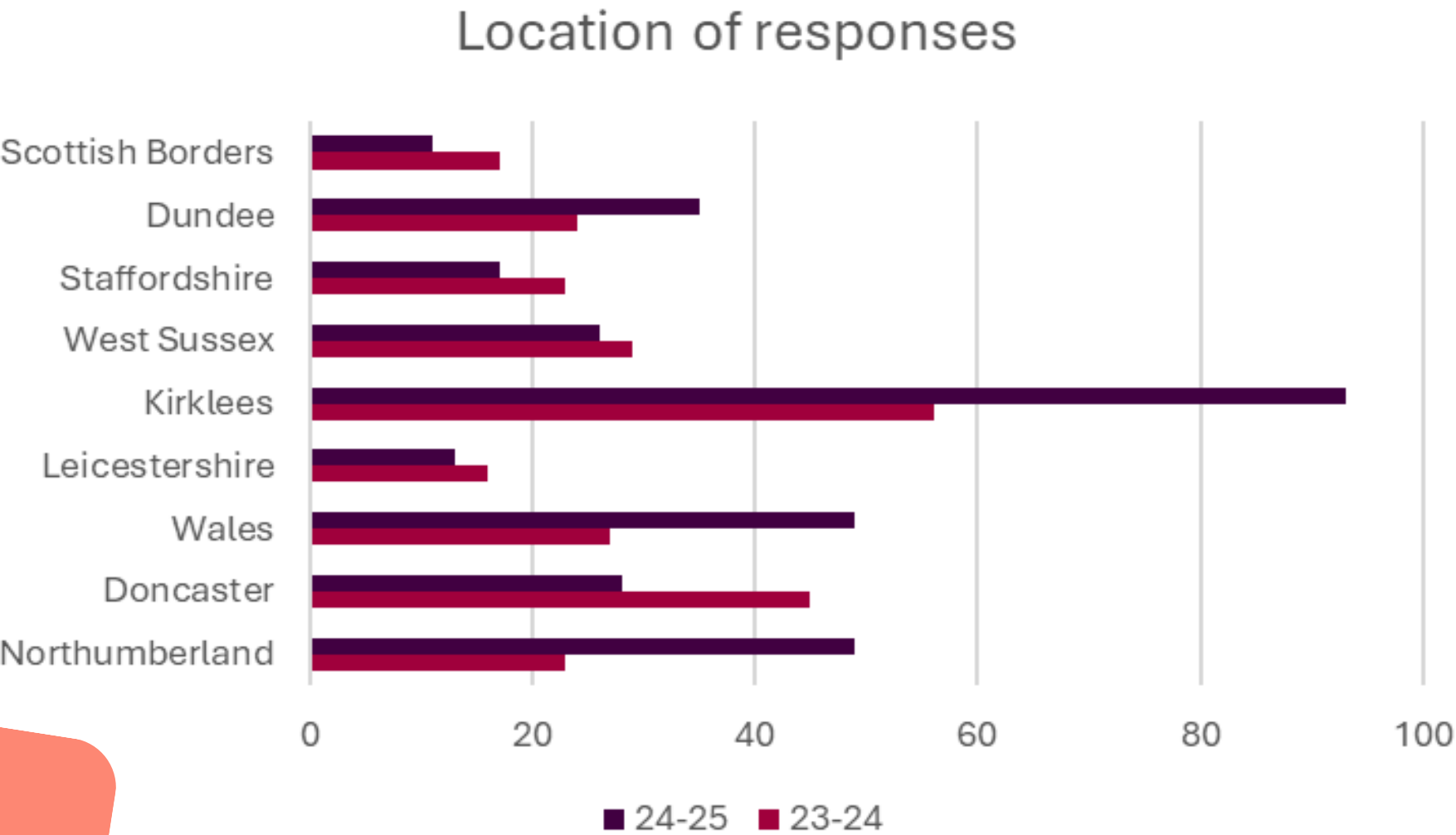
It is important to ensure we effectively develop our services, that both people living with dementia, and their carers, family and friends are given the opportunity to complete this survey. In some cases families wish to complete the survey together as joint feedback. Not all answered this question, however of those that did 55% were received from people living with dementia.

For our baseline and follow up surveys we had 160 initial responses and will include 94 completed follow-up surveys, with 74 able to be matched to those who completed a baseline survey.



Location

Responses were received from 9 areas where we provide dementia activity and support group. Overall the response rate was positive, however was slightly less than 23-24 from 340 (23-24) to 321 (24-25), however this was due to less number of services involved in the 24-25 survey. As shown in the graph, a number of services have increased the number of responses for 24-25, representing a growth in the service provision we have established this year.

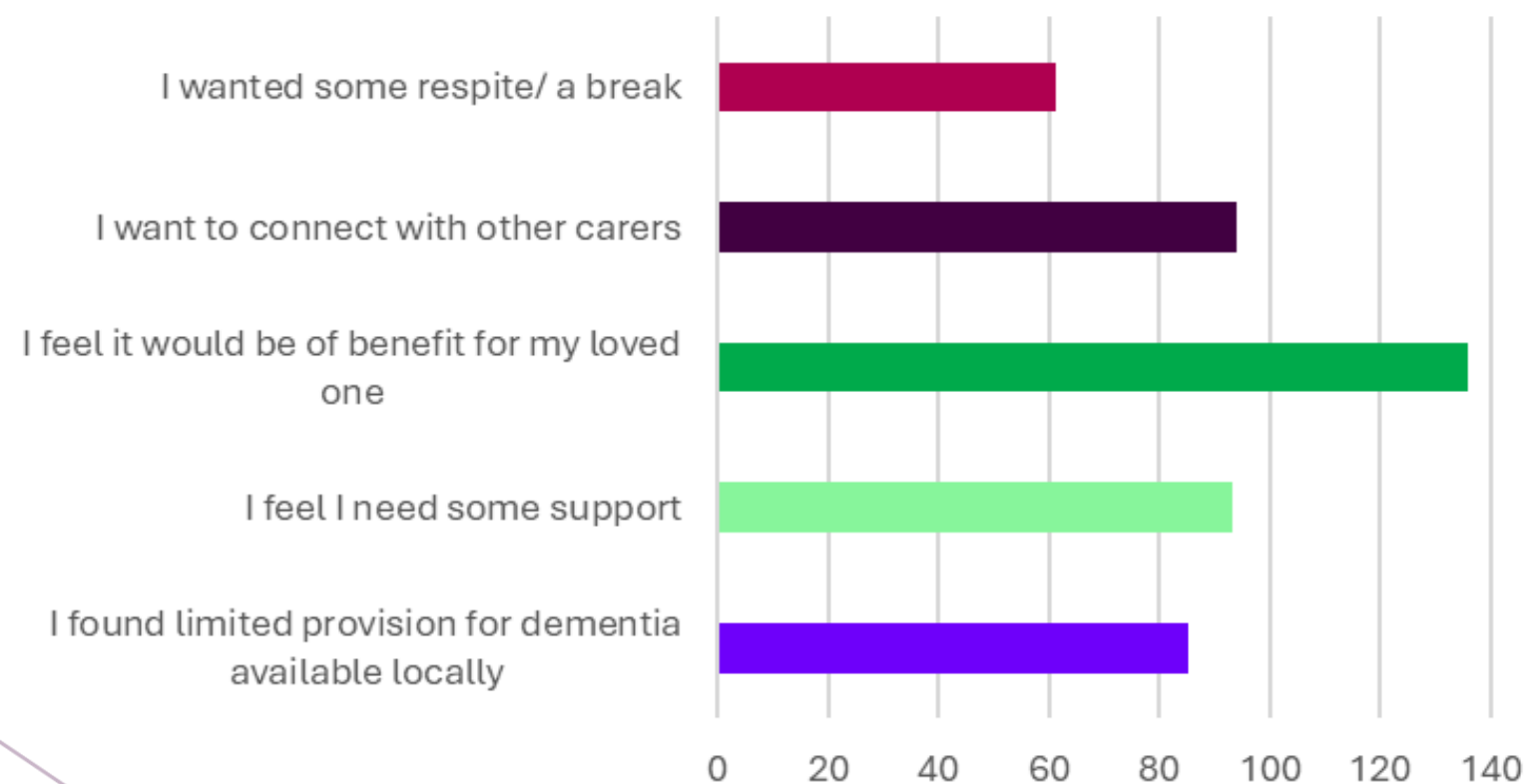


Reasons For Accessing Groups

We asked people to choose from a range of options in our baseline surveys to help us understand the reasons why people continue to access our dementia services, they were able to choose as many options as applicable. 85% of people report one of the reasons for joining the group is that they feel it would be of benefit for the person living with dementia. 57% of carers were looking for some support, and 58% wanted the opportunity to connect with other carers in similar circumstances. 53% also felt there was limited dementia provision available within their local area. The aim of our dementia portfolio is to set up groups where there is limited provision and where identified demand is required.

"66% of people who attend an RVS dementia group do not attend any other community groups"

Reasons for joining the group



*"If I didn't come here,
I don't go anywhere"*

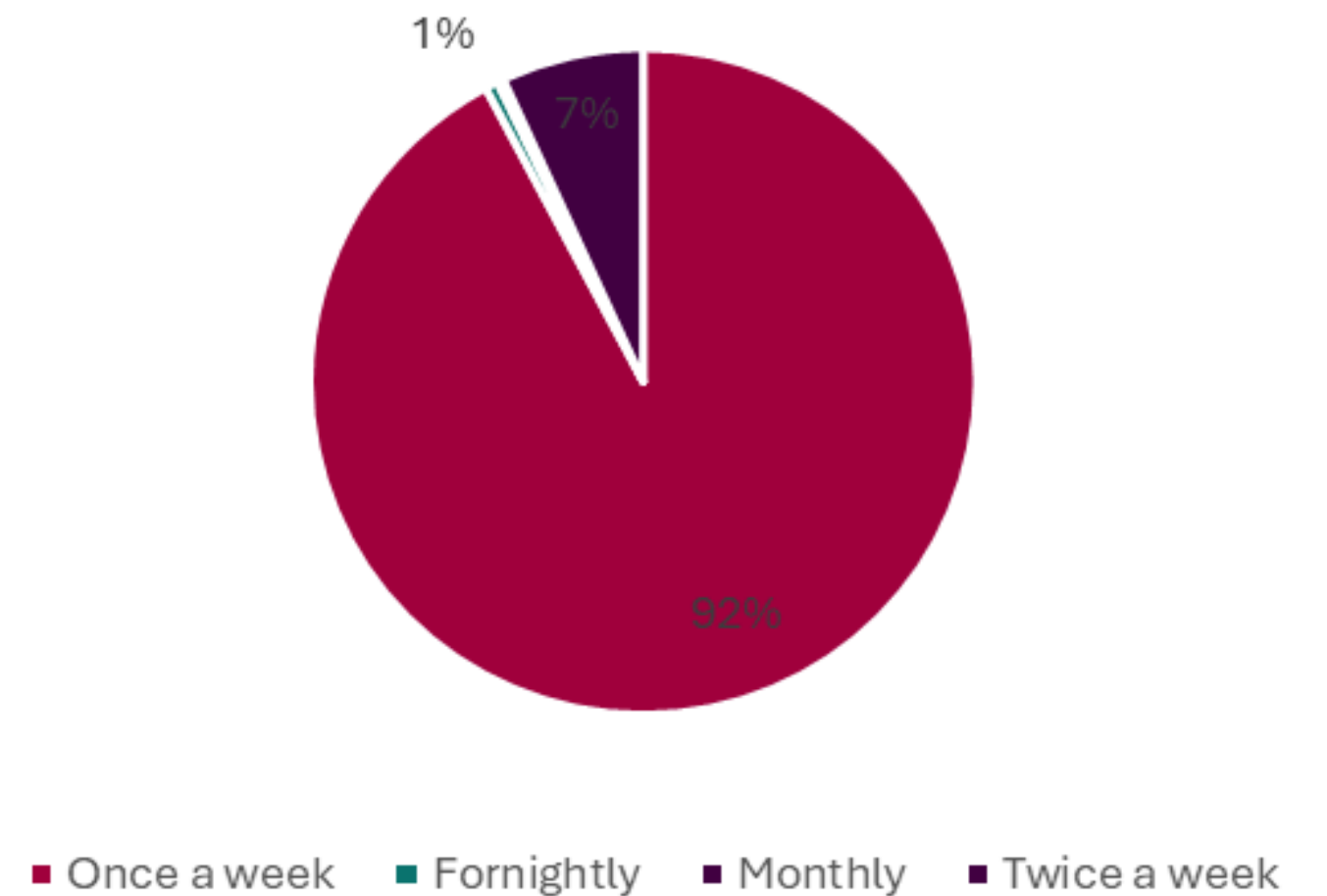


Frequency of Attendance

The majority of our groups run on a weekly basis and for 2 hours, to support with continuity and routine for our members. Some run for 4 hours providing lunch and a longer varied activity session. We have a small number of groups that run on a fortnightly or monthly basis, with some members joining us at different groups to increase their regularity of attending when additional support is required.



Frequency of Attendance



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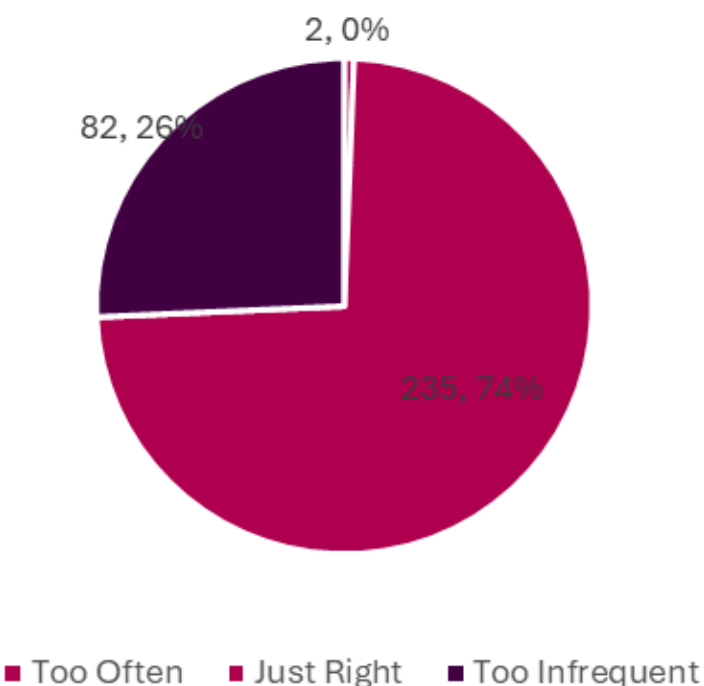
We received 320 responses to this question, with the majority of people attending once a week (296), 22 attend twice a week, 3 fortnightly and 1 person monthly.

We also asked people for their views on the frequency of group:

This year we have received an increase in number of people who feel the frequency of groups is not often enough at 26%, (2024:17%). Of those who feel the groups are not often enough 96% attend once a week and 4% attend twice a week. These responses were reported in 7 areas; Scottish Borders (3), Doncaster (24), West Sussex (3), Northumberland (3), Dundee (3), 35 (Kirklees) and Wales (11).

We received 13 comments from people in our improvements question in relation making groups longer and more often as ways to improve the service. This was the main area of feedback within the section of the questionnaire.

Views on group frequency



“Just to say keep up the good work and there should be more groups like this. Living with dementia and being a carer can take its toll so having this escape does us both good”



Group Feedback

98% of people rate their group as either Excellent or Good. This is a fantastic result to see that people feel the groups are of a high standard.

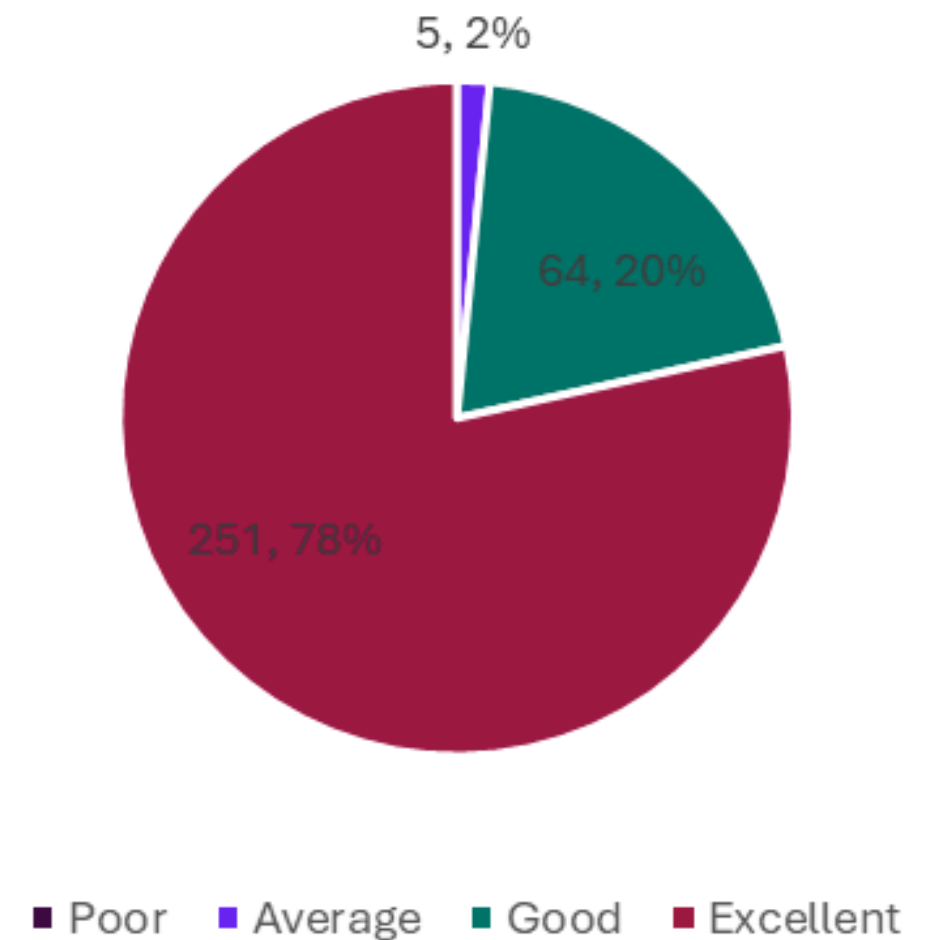
People also took the time to tell us why they felt this way:

“We really enjoy the group. We look forward to it every week and it has become a favourite activity for my mum and I to do together.”

“What a wonderful service and lovely group of staff. I have been to other groups but they are not as good as this one. Thank you”

“Group has been a centre of support for myself and husband”

Overall, how would you rate the group?



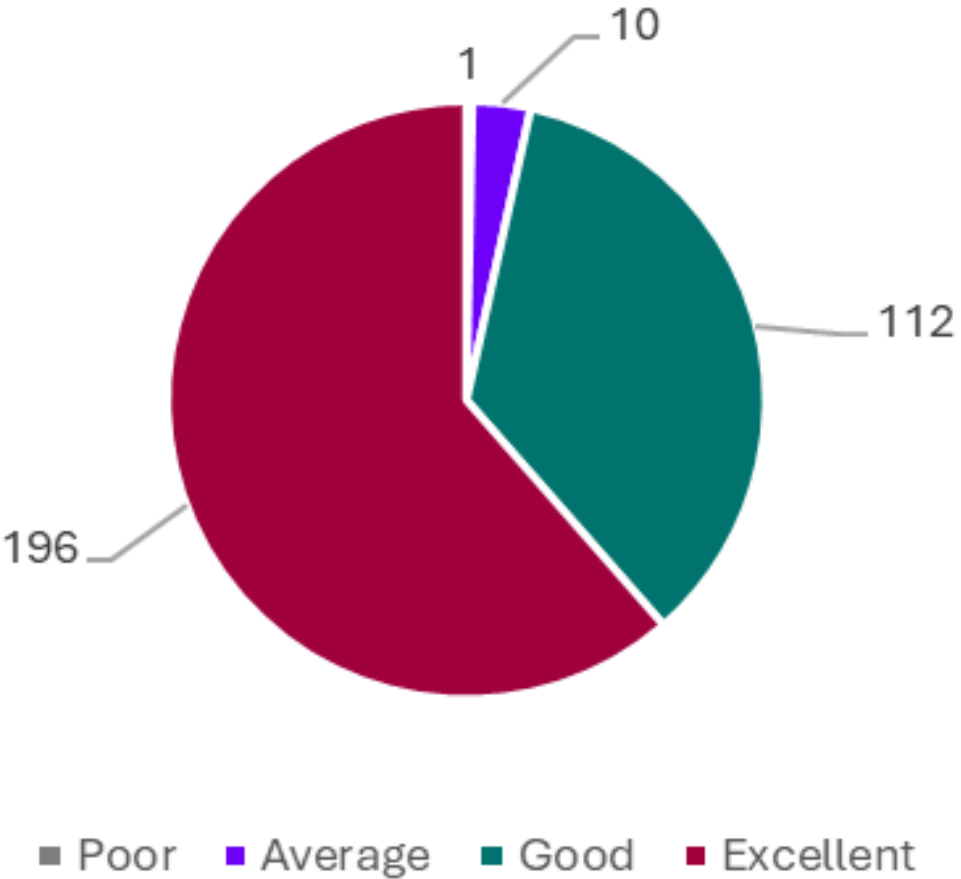
Activity Choice

97% of people feel the choice of activities are good or excellent. It is important that we continue to work with our members to ensure that the activities are suitable for the group and meet their interests and needs. We will continue to take time with our group members to ensure we provide variety across our groups session. This year we have hosted many different types of sessions, including dance sessions, chair based exercise, VE day parties, music and sing alongs, boules and much more.

“The activities help us. We do everything from singing, games, art, etc. All to stimulate our memory.”



How would you rate the choice of activities at the group?



“The groups have great variety of activities for fine motor skills (ART) and movement for my dad”

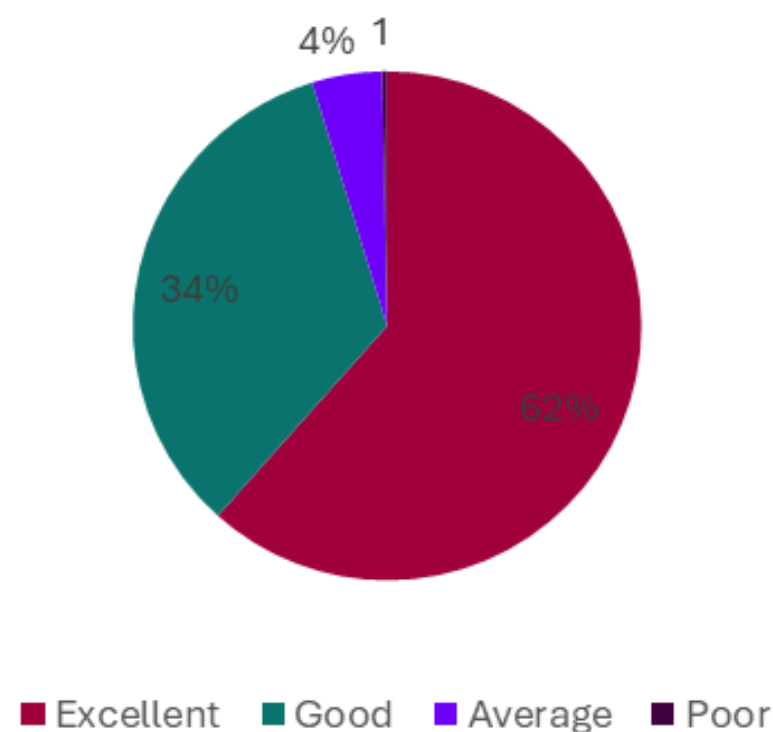
Support Network

One of the aims of our activity and support groups is to bring people together who are going through similar situations. It is often reported that following a diagnosis of dementia, life can become isolated very quickly. Community groups bring people together, and help them feel part of their community, enable people to make friendships that extend beyond group and a new support network to help when challenges arise.

An important part of our group provision is helping people to become aware of the other provision within the area, so we invite in external organisations and charities to raise awareness of the support available, such as Community Wellbeing teams, Dementia Advisors, social prescribed, local community groups and many more.

It is fantastic to see that 96% of people feel that by coming along to one of our groups it has helped offer them a support network.

How well does the group provide you with a supportive network?



"I bring my wife to group and I think we both benefit from the sessions. I like the variety and other agencies often pop in to offer support and advice. Great service and team"

"Without this group my dad would see no one else apart from me. Although he looks a bit negative he really enjoys the care, chat and attention and hates to miss it. It has given him something to look forward to and a sense of belonging. Thanks too for the support and advice I receive as his carer."

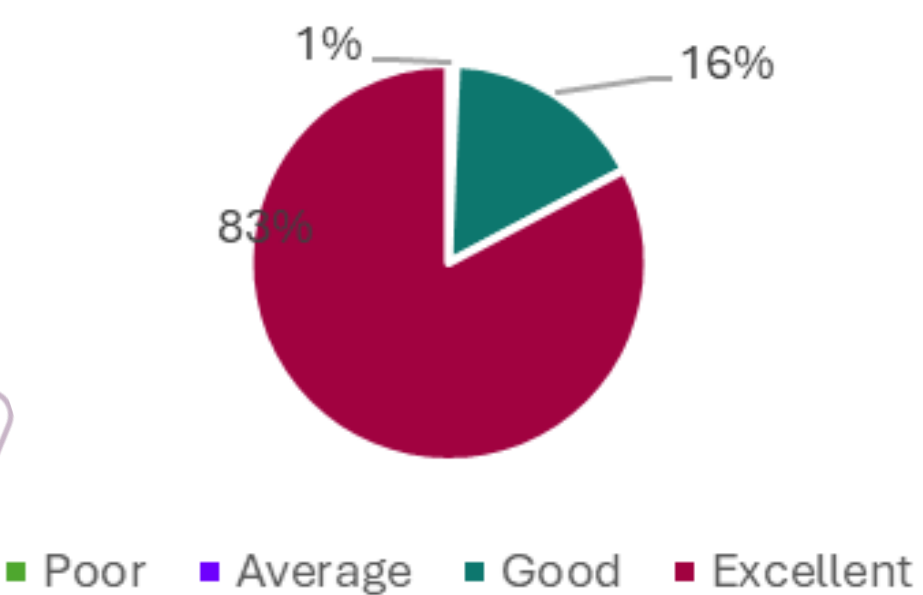
"I've met some carers who go through similar things to me and it helps to have others to confide in and get advice from"

Staff & Volunteers

All groups are supported by at least one staff member, and a team of volunteers. 99% of people feel the support they receive from our teams, alongside their knowledge of dementia is ‘Good’ or ‘Excellent’.

There were many lovely comments made about our staff teams, some of which are shared below:

How would you rate the support you receive from staff and volunteers at the group?

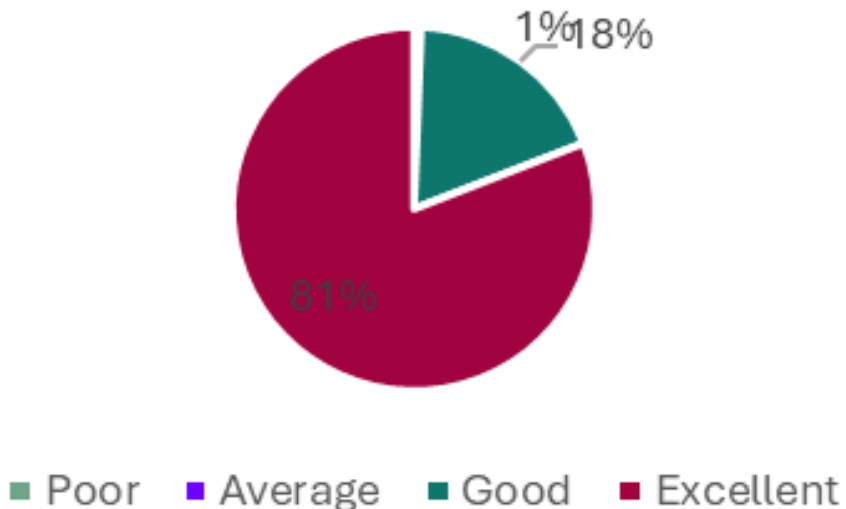


“I feel better when I am at group. The team are wonderful and nothing is too much trouble.”

“Great group, and wonderful support by all staff”

“I have nothing but praise for this service. The staff and volunteers are brilliant. Very caring, supportive and understanding. I know my mum is in safe hands and that she is enjoying her time there.”

How would you rate the staff and volunteer knowledge and support of dementia?



Group Impacts

In our follow-up surveys we asked people to rate the group, of the 94 who completed a follow up survey, 88 (94%) rated the group as 5 out of 5, and 6 (6%) as 4 out of 5. In both evaluations we asked people to tell us more about the types of impacts the group have for them.

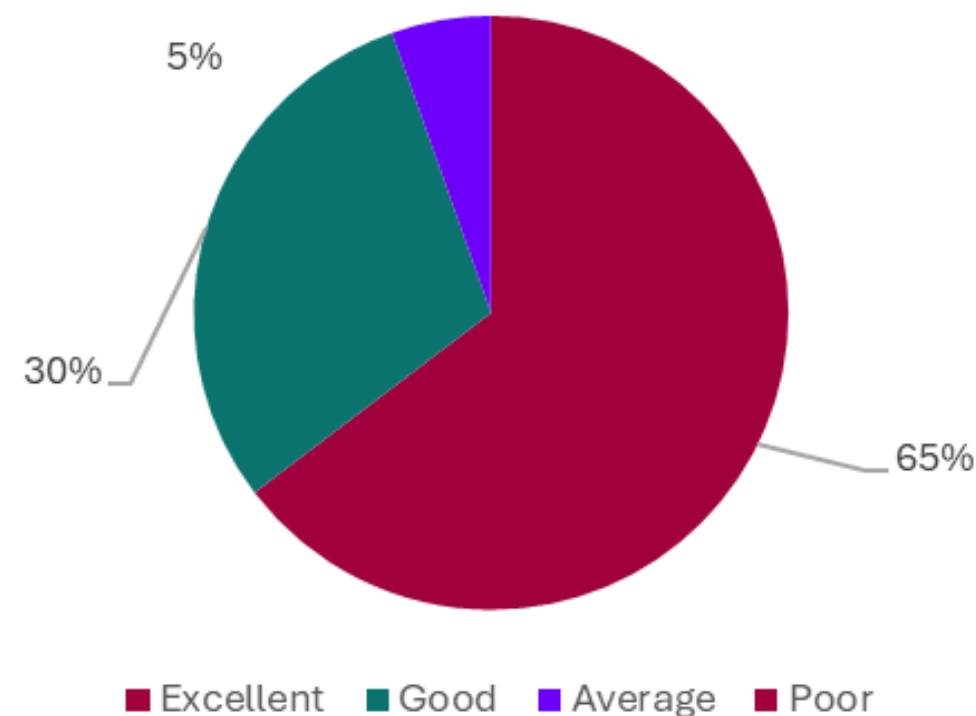
Social Contact

ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE

95% of people feel their social contact has increased as a result of coming to an RVS dementia group. For many people this is the one time in the week they leave home, and see other people. It is important that we continue to reach people and ensure they have the opportunity, should they wish, to make new friends and to reduce social isolation amongst people affected by dementia.

“Attending has increased our social interaction which is very important. The social interaction is the most help. The quizzes that we do together help my husband to remember”

To what extent does the group help increase your social contact?



“My parents have found the support and new network of friends and support staff and life line. Particularly for my dad who can find life a challenge. Thank you”

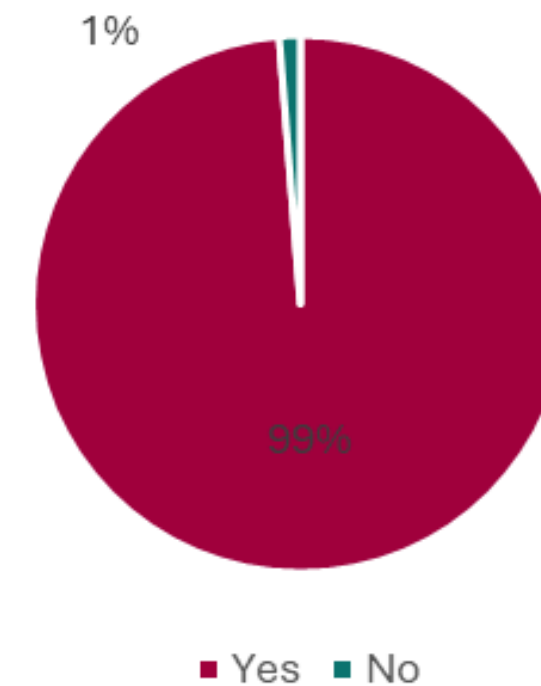


Support

99% of people feel the group meets their current needs, 4 people answered 'No' to this question. We will continue to support our members to access any additional support that is required outside of group, and ensure that support within group offers variety to capture all interests and wishes.

"My wife is not very vocal but I know she enjoys the group as much as I do. Initially I was just going to stay for one session but I never left. These groups are important to both of us for very different reasons"

Does the group, staff and volunteers provide you with the support you need?



Wellbeing

We asked our members if the group has any impact on their wellbeing. It is great to see that 99% of people feel there is a positive impact on their emotional and physical wellbeing.

In our 3-6 month follow survey, carers were asked to choose from a range of options on impacts they have seen within their loved one with dementia. 86% stated they had seen some improvement in their loved one since joining group, in the following areas:

- **68% a positive improvement in mood**
- **56% improvement in overall wellbeing**
- **34% had seen improved attention**
- **16% an increased appetite**
- **19% an improvement in physical function**
- **5% improvement in language**

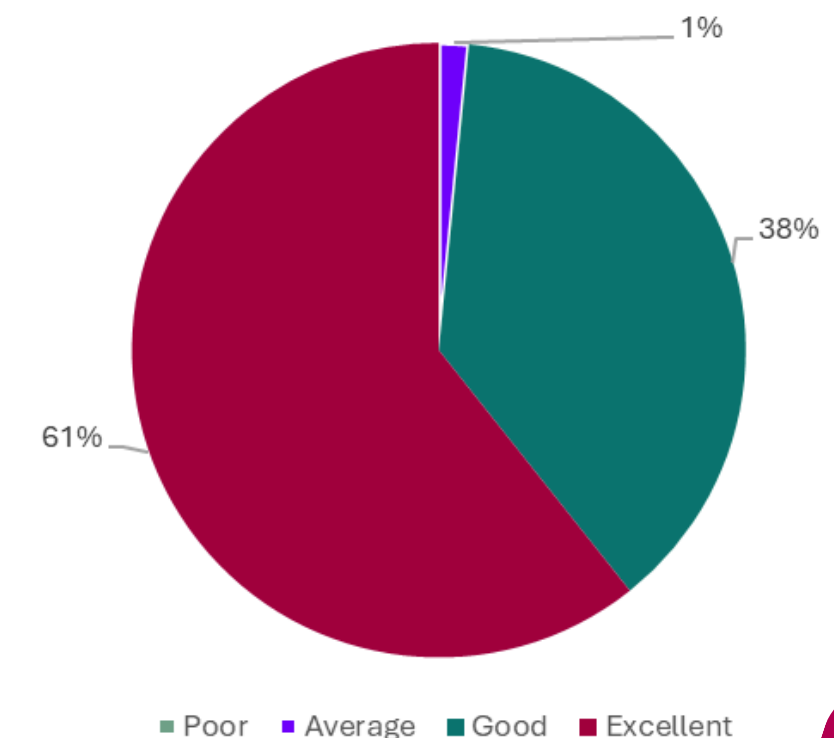
"Mam is 95 and loves being out. She eats better when she's out also".

"I have made friends. I do things I don't normally do. I have kept independence as I walk to group alone and attend and this is my group on my own where I don't need someone."

"We are quite isolated so the group provides social interaction. This much helps mum's mental stimulation. Afterwards, she is clearly more alert. This is better than medicine."

"Our group are all very friendly and the group has given both my partner and myself a new outlook."

How well does the group help you feel better physically and emotionally?

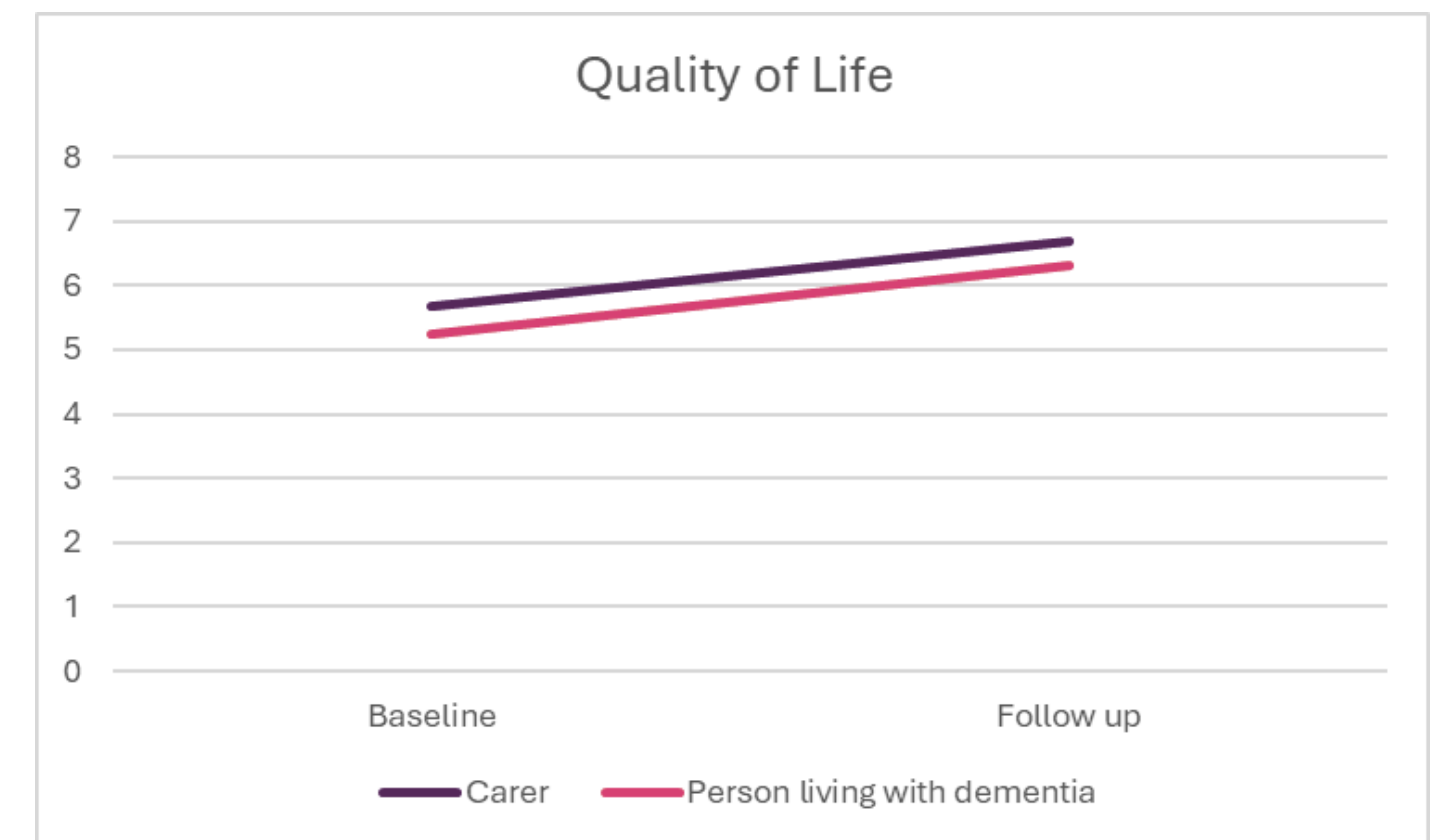



Quality of Life

We asked carers to report their feelings on Quality of Life for themselves and their loved one at joining group and following 3-6 months of attending group. We can see that there is a slight increase in rating of Quality of Life at the 2nd rating, we hope that by coming along to a group people are able to get the support they need which has contributed to this outcome.

100% of people said they would recommend Royal Voluntary Service Dementia Groups to a friend.

“Living with dementia is really difficult and tiring. We both look forward to coming to group as for a few hours we forget about the difficulties we face and just enjoy being with our friends and having a good time. My husband changes as soon as he walks in the room. He smiles, joins in and has the banter with the team. I see how much he enjoys it and love to see him and the difference it makes. I applaud the team for their hard work and commitment. They are all a breathe of fresh air. Sometimes I help the staff and this doesn’t bother my husband at all. At home he can be very clingy and demanding”



The background features abstract geometric shapes in shades of purple and red. In the top left, there are overlapping rounded rectangles in dark purple and a vibrant red. In the top right, there are thin, light purple outlines of rectangles. In the bottom left, there are more thin, light purple outlines of rectangles. In the bottom right, there are overlapping rounded rectangles in dark purple and red, similar to the top left but with different orientations.

**Thank you to all our funders for their
kind support of our dementia
services**