

Climate Wisdom



Empowering dementia-friendly climate action through storytelling, inclusion and community resilience.



YEAR ONE IN NUMBERS

220

People living with dementia

63

Care partners

62

Volunteers

15

Meeting Centres

3

Regions — Angus, Fife & Dundee

A CHANGING CLIMATE · SUMMER 2026

Europe’s worst heatwave on record.

40°C+

peaks across France, Spain & Italy

~1,000

excess deaths in France alone

“When it’s hot like last week, I just can’t do anything, I have no energy, it just drains me.”

The UK broke its June temperature record; researchers say such heat would have been “*virtually impossible*” 50 years ago. **Older people and people living with dementia are the most at risk:** from heat stress, disrupted routines and isolation.

OUR RESPONSE · WHERE WE GO NEXT

Meeting Centres as resilience & learning hubs

- Cool, safe, familiar spaces and heat-health plans during extreme weather
- Trusted routines for checking on members living alone
- Local adaptation plans - Place Standard with a Climate Lens
- Knowledge passed on via the Learning Academy & Climate Ambassadors
- Feeding evidence into Scotland’s National Adaptation Plan
- Scaling across Europe via the MeetingDem Network

THE CHALLENGE

Climate change hits older people and those living with dementia hardest, yet they are almost absent from climate discourse. The Healthy Ageing in a Changing Climate report (Woolrych et al., 2023) warned that climate responses will fail without meaningful engagement of older people. **Climate Wisdom answers that gap.**

WHAT IS CLIMATE WISDOM?

A five-year partnership embedding dementia-inclusive climate action within Scotland’s **Meeting Centres**, community hubs supporting the wellbeing, rights and participation of people living with dementia. Five co-produced strands:

- Participatory **storytelling & environmental arts**
- Climate Ambassador training** carbon literacy, facilitation, digital inclusion
- Intergenerational learning** via the Meeting Centres Learning Academy
- Local **Climate Action & Resilience Plans** (Place Standard with Climate Lens)
- Open-access resources** print, audio, digital & Easy Read for national scaling

THE WISDOM IS ALREADY THERE

Members hold generational knowledge of resilience, reusing, mending, and making do, skills now rebranded as “*upcycling*” and “*sustainable living*”. Climate Wisdom doesn’t reinvent the wheel; **it learns from what people already know.**

LED BY LIVED EXPERIENCE

A Lived Experience Steering Group, **4 people with dementia, 3 care partners and 3 professionals**, shapes how the project works, not just what it does. Key decisions taken by the group:

- Wrote their own working agreement, replacing pre-written terms
- Developed an NIHR-aligned payment policy: *lived experience is expertise*
- Co-created the visual identity with Sister Creative
- Chose creative, participatory evaluation over traditional surveys



Climate Wisdom

Our project logo (above) was co-designed by the Lived Experience Steering Group.

CO-PRODUCING THE EVALUATION

The group’s message was clear: **surveys are the least favoured method**. Tools must be short, creative and run in small groups. The agreed toolkit:

- Climate Empowerment & Inclusion Survey:** dementia-friendly traffic-light scale
- Climate Emotions Wheel:** tracking emotional readiness with faces and words
- Resilience Tree:** roots (knowledge), trunk (coping), branches (values)
- Place Standard Mapping:** community assets, barriers and priorities
- “Pick & Mix” toolkit:** passing learning to future cohorts

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

“We’re not just playing bingo.”

Climate activity gave members a sense of making a difference - of being part of something bigger.

MAGIC MOMENTS

Year 1 moved beyond awareness to real behaviour change - in centres, at home and across communities:

- Recycling, water-saving and biodiversity habits taken home
- Colour-coded bins & clearer signage make recycling dementia-friendly
- Members asking artists how materials are sourced, reused, disposed of
- Centres writing their own climate & environment policies

GROWING & LEARNING

Climate organisations, once hesitant, are now seeking us out. New partnerships with **The Ecology Centre** and **Greener Kirkcaldy**. The Ecology Centre is starting its own dementia group, with STAND delivering training that will outlast our funding.

- Co-production takes time** - branding and evaluation tools took months longer than planned; that time builds ownership.
- Fun drives engagement** - enjoyment makes climate action meaningful, and members bring their own knowledge to it.

ON THE GROUND - EVERYDAY CLIMATE ACTION ACROSS THE MEETING CENTRES



Spring planting & growing



Connecting with nature & wildlife



Nature collage & visual art



Air-cleaning plants, gifted to the community



Composting & upcycling

Climate Wisdom
Partners



outsidethebox

HERIOT
WATT
UNIVERSITY
UK | DUBAI | MALAYSIA

