

# **Funding secured for dementia programme at Edinburgh Leisure**

## **Funding from the Encouraging and Supporting Grassroots Activity Fund will support the dementia programme at Edinburgh Leisure.**

The charity's Movement for Memories programme will receive £19,800 of funding from the Age Scotland About Dementia project and The Scottish Government.

Sam Scott, Development Officer at Edinburgh Leisure, welcomed the support saying: "We're delighted and thankful to receive the grant. The funding will enable us to continue offering people with dementia in Edinburgh a range of opportunities to keep active, from 1:1 support from buddy volunteers to enjoy activities of their choice, to dementia friendly activities within our sports and leisure facilities, to our physical activity outreach service with community groups across the city.

"Edinburgh Leisure is always looking for volunteers to support people living with dementia. Our volunteers make a real difference by accompanying and supporting individuals with dementia to take part in a physical activity of their choice, like gym, golf, fitness classes, tennis, or swimming. Whatever the participant enjoys, your support will play a vital role in helping them enjoy their activity and improve their wellbeing. So, if you have an interest in health and physical activity, we'd love to hear from you."

The funding will support people like 79-year-old David, who plays badminton with his buddy volunteer at Craiglockhart Leisure and Tennis Centre. His sister and carer Julie said: "David used to play football professionally, so physical activity has always been a big part of his life. He wanted to keep active, but his dementia meant that he could no longer do it without extra support.

"The change in him since he started playing badminton has been enormous. His short-term memory is poor, but he remembers how to play, and he hasn't lost his competitive spirit. He comes out of the session like a new man – his spirits are lifted, he's chattier, and often his memory seems to improve for a while. He's almost like 'enhanced David' when I pick him up."

Movement for Memories offers people at all stages of their dementia journey with a range of options to be active, from personalised one-to-one support to enjoy activities they previously enjoyed independently but need a helping hand with now, to a physical activity outreach service for local support groups to enable people to get active in familiar community settings like church halls or community centres. All participants referred to Movement for Memories receive an Edinburgh Leisure card providing 12-weeks free access to gym, swim, golf, tennis, and fitness classes followed by 9 months of subsidised access.

Not only does getting active help participants to maintain or improve their physical health, but it also helps them to improve their mental wellbeing, build social connections, remain integrated in their community and maintain independence for longer.

Dementia affects an estimated 8,000 people in Edinburgh and 90,000 people in Scotland, an estimated 3,000 of whom are under 65. Dementia is not an inevitable part of ageing. It is an umbrella term that can be caused by a number of diseases which, over time, damage the brain, typically leading to

deterioration in both brain and bodily health. The most common types of dementia are Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia, mixed dementia, dementia with Lewy bodies, and frontotemporal dementia.

To find out more about **Movement for Memories**, visit: <http://rb.gy/xesua2l>

To find out more about being a **Movement for Memories Buddy Volunteer**, visit: <http://rb.gy/nzsnp7>

