

**Aim of the project:** To improve dementia services for carers and those they care for.

**Area:** Broxtowe

**Project lead:** Elaine Cooper

## Contents:

- The evolution of the project.
- Red Tray initiative.



A 6 minute read.

## Background...

Back in 2023, we sat down with Elaine to learn how the South Nottinghamshire Place Based Partnership (PBP) had started building a strong co-production and involvement approach to improve dementia services for carers and the people they care for.

One of their first steps was establishing **Broxtowe Action Network for Dementia (BAND)**, a co-production group made up of people with lived experience.

We caught up with Elaine recently, to hear how things have moved on, especially with the Broxtowe Action Network for Dementia Group—and to pick up some fresh tips on what makes a co-production group really work.

## Broxtowe Action Network for Dementia...

The group meets online and keeps things action-focused.

Although members of the PBP still attend, the group runs independently, with one member taking on the role of chair. The group collectively sorts out meeting setup and agenda-setting, which has helped build stability and a real sense of ownership.

Day to day, the group:

- Raises awareness.
- Champions co-production, and
- Builds collaborative relationships across the system.

They listen closely to people's experiences and work with partners to deliver relevant projects that genuinely make a difference for people with dementia and their carers.

Every September, they host an in-person listening event—a chance to raise their profile and nurture relationships with partners and stakeholders.

A group photo from the September 2025 listening event.



The conversations and themes that come out of this open session set the group's priorities for the year ahead.

Read on for some examples of the projects the group have been involved in.

## Spotlight on...the Red Tray initiative

The Red Tray Initiative began after people shared that mealtimes at Nottingham University Hospitals (NUH) were often difficult for patients with dementia. Many didn't eat enough because they lacked the encouragement they'd usually get from loved ones.

To understand more, the group worked with the NUH Patient Participation Group, looking into:

- How mealtimes were managed.
- What volunteer support existed, and
- How the red tray system was being used.

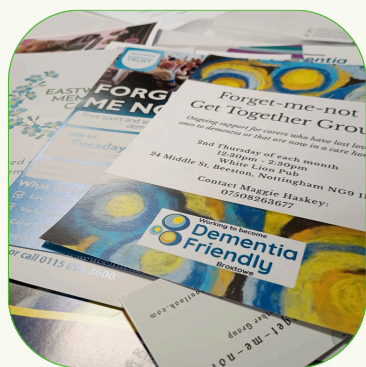
The red trays are supposed to flag anyone who needs extra support with eating or drinking—but not everyone knew about them and they weren't being used consistently across hospital sites.

To raise awareness of the system and the volunteer help available, the group worked with the Patient Participation Group to create a [Mealtimes Leaflet](https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/nottinghamshire/fsd/files/mealtimes_1.pdf), which can be found at [https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/nottinghamshire/fsd/files/mealtimes\\_1.pdf](https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/nottinghamshire/fsd/files/mealtimes_1.pdf).

## Spotlight on...Home Care Experiences

The group has also been looking at differences between council-delivered and privately delivered home care.

With Nottinghamshire County Council currently reforming how home care is commissioned, the group has been helping shape a series of focus groups to capture real-life experiences of people receiving home care.



A photo of local dementia support groups.

## Learning...

- Handing over responsibility for chairing, agenda-setting and actions helps members take real ownership and supports long-term sustainability.
- Letting the group choose a meeting format that fits around caring responsibilities, accessibility needs and practicalities makes continued participation easier.
- Setting priorities each year—shaped by the listening event—keeps the group focused on what matters most to people with dementia and their families right now.
- Talk openly with the group about any tax implications associated with remuneration, and explore alternative ways of expressing thanks.

### Find out more and get involved...

Do you have lived experience of dementia?

Are you interested in shaping and improving services for people living with dementia, in Broxtowe?

Can you spare an hour a month to meet online?

Email [justine@dementiastudio.org](mailto:justine@dementiastudio.org) to find out more about BAND and how you can get involved.