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Welcome to our May 2026 newsletter from Deepness Dementia. We hope you have all had a wonderful May Bank Holiday and looking forward to Summer 2026.

I am the new Newsletter Editor, Jim Campbell. I am still trying to find my feet, so any feedback or what you would like to read in this newsletter, please do get in touch.

This month we are welcoming two new Board Members and have a very informative article from Howard Gordon about Personal Budgets which enable people who need social care to have choice and control.

Please share this newsletter with your friends, family and colleagues.



If you want to contribute to the newsletter, please get in touch with - jim@deepnessdementiaradio.com



**Check out below a list of what is coming up in this newsletter.
You can click on the links and skip straight to that article.**

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Welcome to Alastair & Mary Snow !

Our newest Members to the Deepness Board of Directors



We are delighted to announce that Alastair and Mary Snow have joined the Deepness Board of Directors. For those who attended our Scottish Dementia Arts Festival 2025 in Stirling, you may remember seeing Alastair and Ron playing the ironing board at the opening event.

Alastair is an artist and activist who worked in the UK visual arts sector for 40 years. He has worked as an advisor and assessor with the Scottish Arts Council, Creative Scotland, Arts Council England, the Arts Council of Wales and local authorities in England and Scotland. He was on chair of AN Newsletter and served as trustee of the Arnolfini Gallery in Bristol. Throughout his career he was an advocate and enabler of art in the public realm.



**Alastair Snow (middle)
playing the Ironing Board**

He moved to Saltburn in 1989 to take up the post of Director of Cleveland arts. He went on to become an independent arts advisor spending much time working for Arts Council England as a National Lottery Assessor. He led the bid from Saltburn for a grant for the purchase of the building which is now Saltburn studios which was successful. It gives him great pleasure to see the very talented artists who work there now.

He retired to Edinburgh in 2011 when he was asked to chair Edinburgh Printmakers. He retired from this position in 2018 just before their move to Fountainbridge.



Throughout his career he has always continued his practice as an artist and photographer and occasional performance artist. Since his diagnosis of Dementia he has continued to paint nearly every day and his creativity sustains him and remains undiminished.

We welcome Alastair and Mary to the Deepness Board, who bring a wealth of experience and knowledge with them. We are looking forward to working with the both of them in the future.

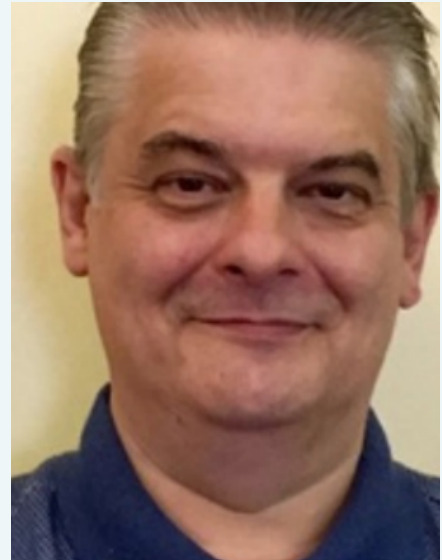
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Personal Budgets: Enabling People to have Choice & Control

Personal budgets enable people who need social care to have choice and control over how public funding is used to meet their assessed needs. In England and Wales, personal budgets and direct payments are core features of statutory social care systems, shaped by distinct legislative frameworks: the Care Act 2014 (England) and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. This article summarises legal foundations, models of delivery, eligibility and assessment, interaction with health funding, outcomes, barriers, and policy implications.



Howard Gordon

Across England, Wales, and Scotland, the key principle is the same: the money must be used to meet the person's assessed care and support needs. If attending a Meeting Centre helps someone with dementia maintain wellbeing, social connection, or independence, then transport and membership fees can usually be included – but only if the local authority agrees they are necessary.

Definitions and Delivery Models

Personal budget: The quantified amount of funding allocated to meet an individual's assessed eligible needs, recorded in the care and support plan. It can be managed in several ways:

- **National personal budget:** Local authority retains funds and arranges services but the plan reflects the individual's budget and choices.



- **Managed personal budget:** The local authority or provider manages the money and arranges services according to the person's plans.
- **Direct payment:** The individual (or nominated/appointed representative) receives funds directly to purchase and manage their own support.
- **Brokerage and support planning:** Local authorities often offer or commission brokerage, payroll, and advisory services to help people use budgets safely and compliantly.

Eligibility, Assessment and Planning

Needs Assessment: Local authorities and health boards assess needs against national eligibility criteria (England) or local eligibility frameworks (Wales), considering outcomes, risks, and strengths.

Financial Assessment: A means test determines the level of individual contribution; caps, thresholds, and charging rules differ between England and Wales and have been subject to policy changes.

Care and Support Plan: The plan documents needs, desired outcomes, the personal budget sum, and how support will be arranged.

Interaction with Health Funding

NHS continuing healthcare (CHC): For people whose primary need is health-based, CHC can fund care outside social care budgets. Where CHC applies, personal budgets for social care needs may be unnecessary, but integrated approaches (pooled budgets, integrated care boards in England, health board arrangements in Wales) are increasingly used to support personalised care.



Integrated Personal Commissioning (IPC) and pooled funds: Pilots and local arrangements have demonstrated models for combining health and social care funds to offer unified personal budgets for people with complex needs.

Integrated Personal Commissioning (IPC) and pooled funds: Pilots and local arrangements have demonstrated models for combining health and social care funds to offer unified personal budgets for people with complex needs.

Outcomes and Evidence

Benefits: Research and evaluations report improved satisfaction, greater control, better alignment of support with individual preferences, potential reductions in formal care costs, and improved wellbeing for some users (Think Local Act Personal; SCIE reviews).

Variability: Outcomes vary by local implementation, availability of support planning, user capacity to manage budgets, and market availability of services.

Commissioning Domiciliary/Home Care Services and Respite Care

Employing personal assistants (PAs) or care workers (including via payroll/umbrella services), paying salaries, employer's National Insurance and pensions where applicable (subject to employment law).

Day-centre activities, transport to access community support and structured social/rehabilitative activities.

Purchasing aids, equipment and assistive technology that meet assessed needs (minor adaptations may be funded via capital schemes; larger adaptations often subject to separate Disabled Facilities Grant rules).



Home help, personal care, meals or meal delivery where part of assessed support.

Community participation, education, work support and short breaks aligned to wellbeing outcomes.

Paying for agreed third-party services or direct care packages from independent providers.

Where applicable, contribution to adaptations, home modifications, or services that reduce assessed needs.

England (Personal Budgets)

Personal budgets in England are designed to give people choice and control over how their support is arranged. They can be used flexibly as long as spending aligns with the agreed care and support plan.

The NHS guidance states that direct payments can be used for many types of support, including help to get to shops or social events, as long as it meets the care plan outcomes.

The Alzheimer's Society also confirms that personal budgets can be used in "many ways to meet the person's needs" once agreed in the support plan.

Implication:

If attending a Meeting Centre is part of the person's support plan, transport and membership fees can be funded.

Wales (Direct Payments)

Wales uses a similar system under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act.



Direct payments in Wales follow the same principle as England: they can be used flexibly as long as they meet the outcomes in the care plan.

Implication:

Transport and membership fees can be covered if they are included in the assessed needs and support plan.

Scotland (Self-Directed Support – SDS)

Scotland’s SDS system explicitly gives people control over how their support is delivered, including the ability to purchase non-traditional forms of support.

SDS allows people to “buy the kind of help they want rather than having to fit into standard services” as long as it meets agreed personal outcomes.

SDS Option 1 (direct payment) and Option 2 (individual service fund) are particularly flexible.

Implication:

If attending a Meeting Centre supports wellbeing, independence, or social participation, SDS funds can be used for transport and membership fees, provided these are included in the support plan.

Conclusion

Personal budgets in England and Wales are central to person-centred social care policy, offering mechanisms for choice, control, and tailored support.



Realising their potential requires investment in support infrastructure, clearer integration with health funding, and attention to equity and market capacity to ensure meaningful options for all eligible people.

They are not just for PA's as some councils would have people believe!

The Care Act 2014 implicitly sets the principle

A personal budget can be used for anything that is necessary to meet a person's eligible needs and achieve the outcomes in their care and support plan. This implicitly allows spending on transport, membership fees, or other non-traditional support—if they are the agreed way to meet assessed needs.

If the Council does not agree they would need to provide a legal basis for not meeting a persons request under the Care Act and any other relevant legislation.

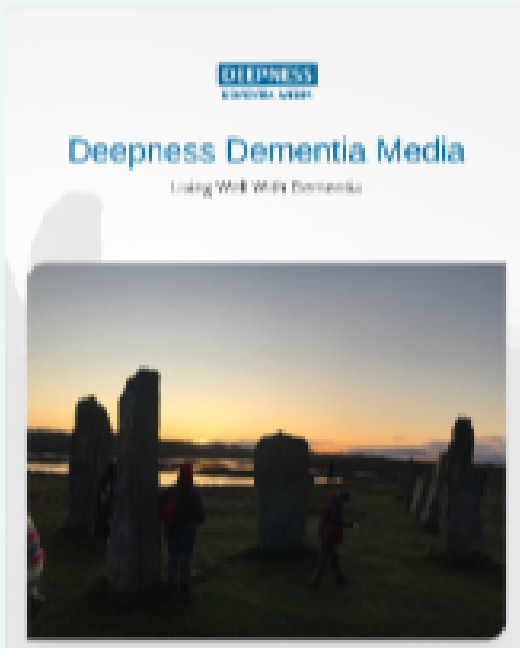
It is advisable to let the local Council manage any budget, especially if someone is being employed with the budget, as it means that the Council are responsible for any statutory requirements not the budget recipient.

That person or their Family/Friend would only be responsible for completing timesheets where someone is employed or sending in receipts.

Where there is community transport and or a Meeting Centre, those organisations should be able to invoice the Council directly on the persons behalf.

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Dementia Media is a platform that gives people tools for living well with dementia designed collaboratively with those with dementia leading the process. By coming together in a supportive, energetic common space makes up a huge difference to the well-being of those going through dementia. As opposed to providing a cure, our goal is to help people become autonomous and get the most out of life. We bring a series of innovative projects - such as our radio station, online education courses, and much more - that use technology and music in a way that keeps people connected and stimulated.

“I didn’t want to die without leaving something for my family to enjoy and remember my strengths,” he says of the thinking behind the EP. “The whole concept was to create something that was a legacy for the person, and as soon as I thought about wanting to do that for myself I knew it was something other people would want to do, to leave our mark on society. It’s almost like leaving our families a gift.”

The Demented Poets EP is on sale now via Bandcamp iTunes and other outlets:

Bandcamp - <https://thedementedpoets.bandcamp.com>

Spotify - <https://open.spotify.com/album/6pngYVybZ3qUf6XMhOOFuK>

Deezer - <https://www.deezer.com/en/album/258048592>

iTunes / Apple Music - <https://music.apple.com/us/album/the-demented-poets-ep/1585080810>

Amazon - <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09FRVYQ1F>

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