

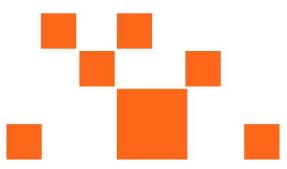
Care in Scotland it's life changing work

Ray Pert, Manager

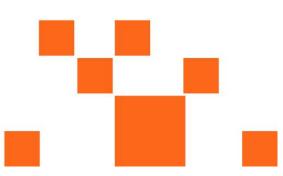
"When you make that connection, whether it's through listening to music or dancing, it's just brilliant!"

Ray is the manager of Beech Hill Care Centre and has worked in care homes for 20 years.

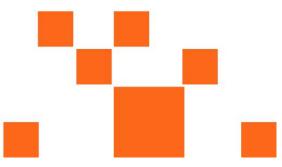
What type of service do you work in?	Owned by Angus Council, Beech Hill Care Centre provides care and support to adults, the majority live with dementia.
	The team adapts their approach to meet individuals' needs and to successfully achieve identified outcomes. Support is also there for families and carers.
Have you always worked in social services?	No. My first role was a trained psychiatric nurse.
Can you tell us more about your job?	Beech Hill Care Centre is one of three care centres run by the local authority, Angus Council.



	The centre offers permanent care, short stay (respite), day care and very sheltered housing which allows people to live independently safe in the knowledge that there is support if required. As the Manager, my responsibilities include ensuring the centre runs effectively, that staff are provided with good leadership and that required standards are met.
	As a team we work alongside service users' families and carers whilst also developing neighbourly relationships with the local community, including playgroups and schools.
	These relationships are hugely important in supporting inter-generational work, forming links between the young and old. Informal social events and school visits, helps demystify what happens within a care home.
What are you working on at the moment?	Preparing our annual self-evaluation for the Care Inspectorate. This is like preparing a 'shop window' for our services, explaining how we are meeting each of the National Care Standards.
Who else is in your team?	The most senior member of my team is the Director of Angus Council People Directorate. Under them is the Head of Adult Services who is responsible for the Service Manager, who is my manager.
	In my direct team as the Centre Manager, I have three Senior Social Care Officers who each have a team of approximately 12 Social Care Officers.
	We also have a hugely important ancillary team including catering staff, cleaners, bus drivers, clerical support and a gardener.



What part of your job motivates you and why?	Working with people. The majority of our service-users are living with dementia which can be challenging. However, the real reward is getting to know people on an individual, one-to- one basis, understanding who they are, and discovering how to connect with them as a person. When you make that connection, whether it's through listening to music or dancing, it's just brilliant!
	The other motivation for me is supporting families and carers, who understandably tend to welcome our help.
What are the challenges, good and not so good that you face in your job?	Like many services, budget and the pressure on Angus Council to save money whilst seeking to do more with less. This can mean looking for innovative ways to work flexibly with a range of partner organisations. At the end of the day, it is about supporting people to achieve their own identified outcomes.
In what way is your career in social services rewarding?	It's great to see the team develop, not just building on their existing skills but in confidence too.
	Taking on Tom Kitwood's person-centred approach, it's incredibly rewarding to see workers embracing a new care culture. Tom Kitwood argued that "people with dementia do not lose their personhood, but rather can be maintained through relationships with other people." It's at the heart of everything we do.
Can you explain the skills and qualities you think are needed to do the role you're doing?	People skills, not just forming relationships but maintaining relationships, ones based on mutual trust and co-operation. The focus has to be on the person living with dementia.



Has your job opened up new learning and development for you?	I have recently graduated with a Masters in Dementia Studies from Stirling University. Once you acquire the understanding, it's like a light being switched on. You suddenly become more aware of the impact you are able to make. Working for Angus Council there are plenty opportunities for training. In addition to statutory training, there's also a wide choice of other personal development opportunities, including free online courses, such as "Tribal", in addition to programmes such as "Promoting Excellence" run by the Scottish Social Services Council.
How do you see your career progressing?	The next obvious career progression could be a managerial role. To be honest, I enjoy having a hands-on job and I am therefore very happy in my current role.
What would you say to someone thinking about a career in social services?	Be clear in your own head where you want to take the service and have the confidence to move in that direction.

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You can hear from people already working in social care, early years or social work as they talk about why they love their job and what a difference they make to someone's life. And find out about the many different types of jobs and areas you can work in.

