

ASUME

Volunteering in Dementia



motivate

Findings so far indicate a range of volunteer motivations that are linked to both professional and personal experiences and values. This is similar to the UK ASUME study.

They look forward to the days we are together. All of them. The relatives and the person himself/herself. And so do I. (AF1)

There is one person who does not really have much help from the municipality. He appears to flourish when I visit him. He does not really have any close relations. (AF4)

Personal enjoyment was a key element of sustainability and the plans to keep volunteering in the future.

In order to better understand the rewards of being an Activity Friend, respondents were asked what they enjoy about their activity. From a pre-populated list, The table below details the frequency of selections.

Enjoyment factors	Stated	Not stated
Helping those with dementia	28 (71.8%)	11 (22.2%)
Helping carers	14 (35.9%)	25 (64.1%)
Helping the organisation	5 (12.8%)	34 (87.2%)
Giving back to society	12 (30.8%)	27 (69.2%)
Forming strong bonds	6 (15.4%)	33 (84.6%)
Feeling needed	23 (59%)	16 (61%)
Learning and developing skills	7 (18%)	32 (82%)
Social interaction	24 (61.5%)	15 (38.5%)
Building trust	15 (38.5%)	24 (61.5%)

Pre-selected range of enjoyment factors – which ones did volunteers state they enjoyed about their role? N = 39.

The most commonly mentioned enjoyment factor related to helping those with dementia generally (71.8%), followed by enjoyment of social interaction (61.5%) and feeling needed (59%). Few volunteers reported that they derived enjoyment from helping their organisation (12.8%) or forming strong bonds (15.4%) in this context.

Social activity was a key element in motivation for volunteers, who indicated that enjoyment and social interactions were key rewards for working with people living with dementia. The use of activities to connect people with places and social spaces was also important. The qualitative feedback in the survey highlighted this well with the list of different places and settings where activities took place—from cinemas, museums to skiing. Connecting people with dementia to valued places and social spaces within their local environment is important for fostering dementia inclusive communities. When many people with dementia experience shrinking social networks, the Activity Friends initiative has potential to promote inclusiveness by supporting interdependencies between people with dementia and their wider social networks.

*The one I am an Activity Friend for is kind of a Granny to me. When her daughter asked me to help her get some respite, I agreed at once
(Volunteer comment, Survey)*



For more information
visit www.asume.co.uk or
contact Dr Vikki McCall,
Principal Investigator of the project
vikki.mccall@stir.ac.uk /
[@vikki_mccall](https://twitter.com/vikki_mccall)