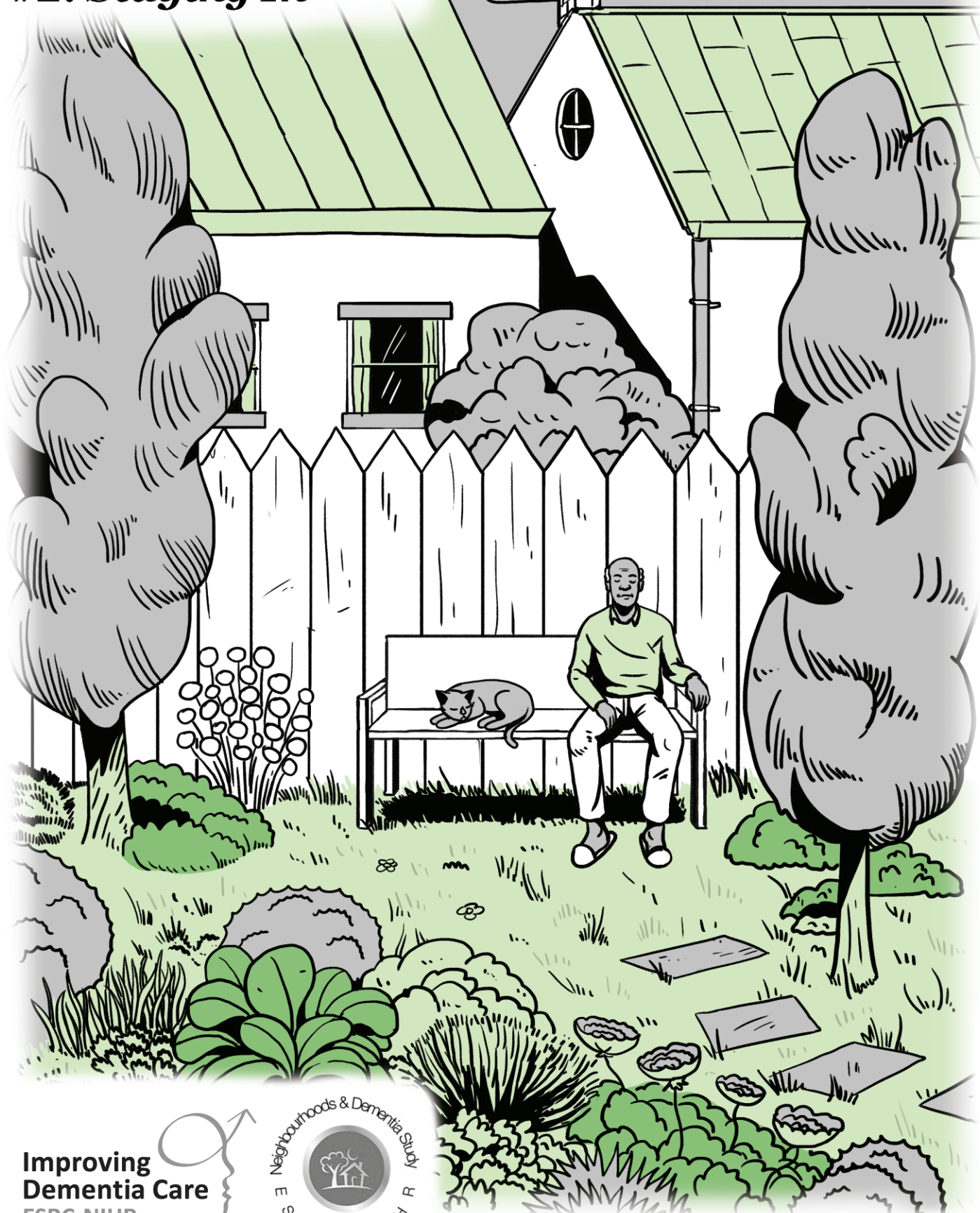


Dementia and Everyday Life

#2: *Staying In*



Improving
Dementia Care
ESRC • NIHR



You can find out more about living with dementia by contacting:

The Alzheimer Society on the National Dementia Helpline:
0300 222 11 22

Or by going to the website: <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/>

Age UK on 0800 055 6112

Or by going to the website: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

The NHS has produced a Dementia Guide that is available on its website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia/about/>

About this booklet

This booklet is one outcome from a research project investigating how neighbourhoods can support people living with dementia. Called 'Neighbourhoods: Our People, Our Places', the research has taken place across Greater Manchester (England), the Forth Valley (Scotland), and Östergötland (Sweden). The research has investigated how people living with dementia and their care partners experience their local neighbourhoods. This includes understanding how neighbourhoods might support or restrict opportunities for informal and semi-formal support; and exploring how neighbourhoods have potential for enabling people living with dementia to live independently in their local communities. This booklet depicts some of the stories told to the research team by people living with dementia in Greater Manchester.

We have aspired to take a collaborative approach, working alongside people living with dementia and their care partners. People living with dementia have been involved at various stages of the research development, including input into the research methods and information materials. A number of people living with dementia worked with us as research participants and advisors throughout the study.

We are finding ways to tell the stories from the research in creative ways. Many of our collaborators, particularly those living with dementia, wanted a way of telling their stories in an illustrative form that is less reliant on text to share information and key messages.

About the authors

This booklet has been created by Dominique Brouwers in collaboration with researchers and participants in the ESRC/NIHR Neighbourhoods: Our People, Our Places study.

Domenique Brouwers – Illustrator

Andrew Clark – Project Lead

Sarah Campbell – Researcher

Chris Armitage - Advisor

Jane Armitage - Advisor

Eric Barton - Advisor

Jennie Fletcher - Advisor

Bob Fletcher – Advisor

Maria Walsh - Advisor

To reference this booklet

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Staying in.

This story brings together the experiences of Amobi, a character that we have created based on the experiences of a number of participants in our research. Amobi was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease a few years ago and is now in his late 70's. He has never married and lives alone with his cat. Amobi has become quite frail and it has become physically more difficult for him to get out and about. Alongside this, his advancing dementia means that he cannot always remember how to get to places that he used to go or how to get home again. Amobi lives in a quiet neighbourhood, where he has lived for more than forty years, and he knows some of his neighbours. There are also new families living on his road that he is less familiar with and he cannot always remember their faces or names.

Throughout the day Amobi has certain routines that he likes to keep. These include making his meals, tidying-up and doing the dishes, and pursuing hobbies at home. He enjoys doing word puzzles and jigsaw puzzles, and in particular loves listening to music and watching sport on television. Although his family live far away, Amobi likes to share updates on family news and events, talking to nieces and nephews and friends on the telephone.

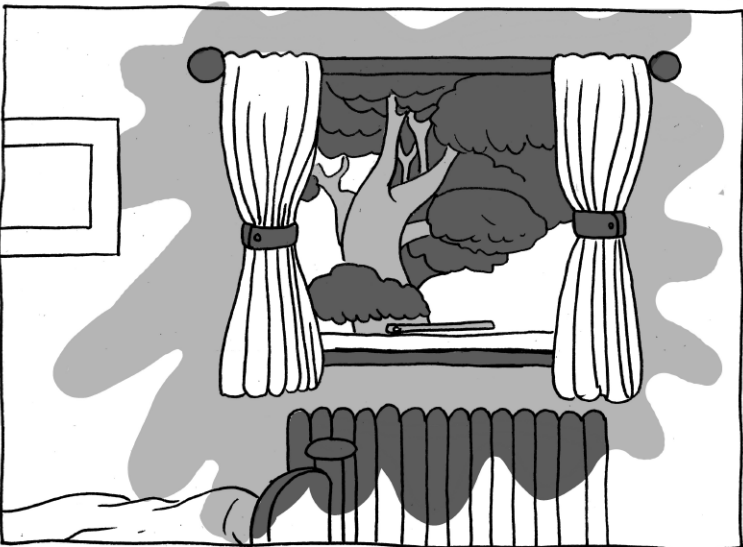
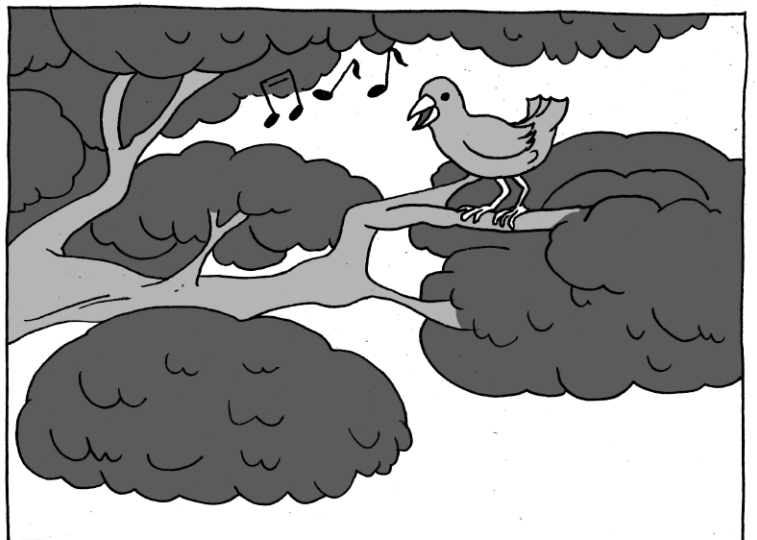
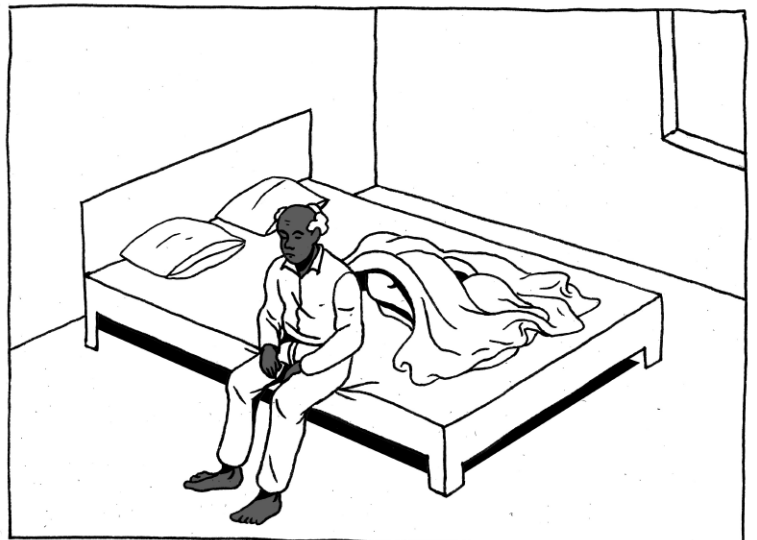
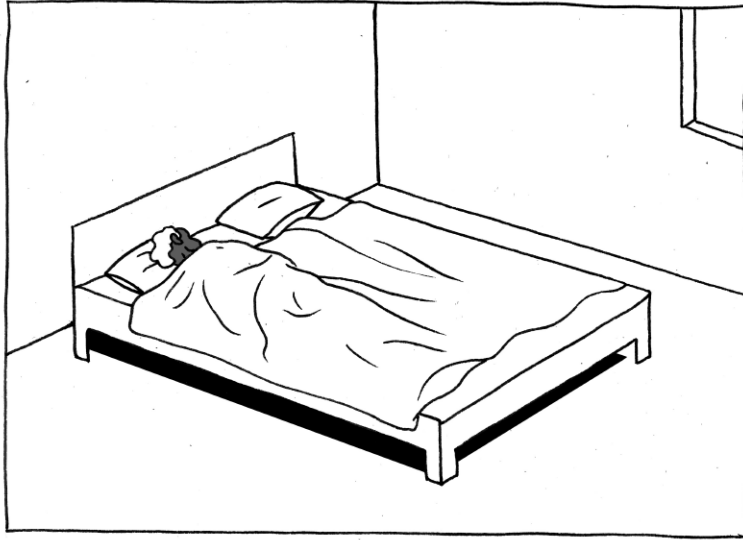
Amobi has always enjoyed the outdoors. On a sunny day he likes to sit in his garden which is a source of pleasure and relaxation for him. Here he can hear sounds of nature and the neighbourhood. Sometimes he will have a chat over the garden fence with his neighbour. Amobi also enjoys the company of his pet cat who he chats to during the day, and who will sometimes curl up on Amobi's knee in the sunshine. If the temperature is a little cool or he cannot get outside, Amobi will sit inside by a sunny window, moving around his house to different spots just as the sun moves round. He also enjoys sitting by an open window where he can hear the sounds of the birds and people passing by on the street.

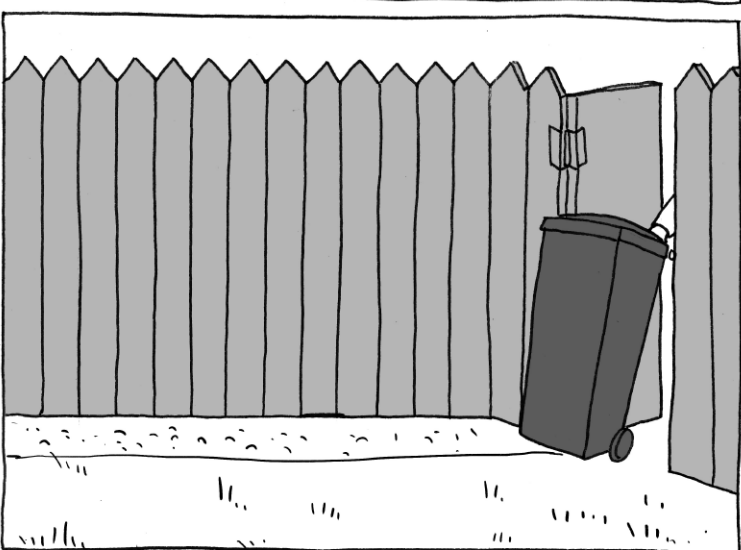
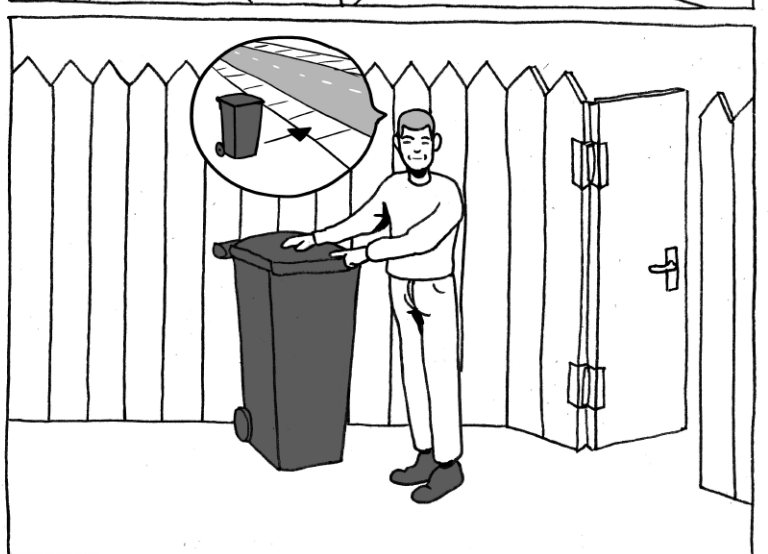
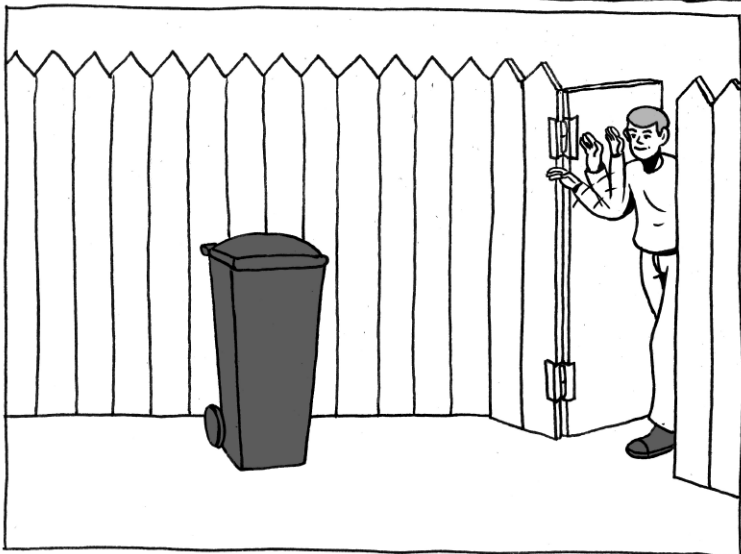
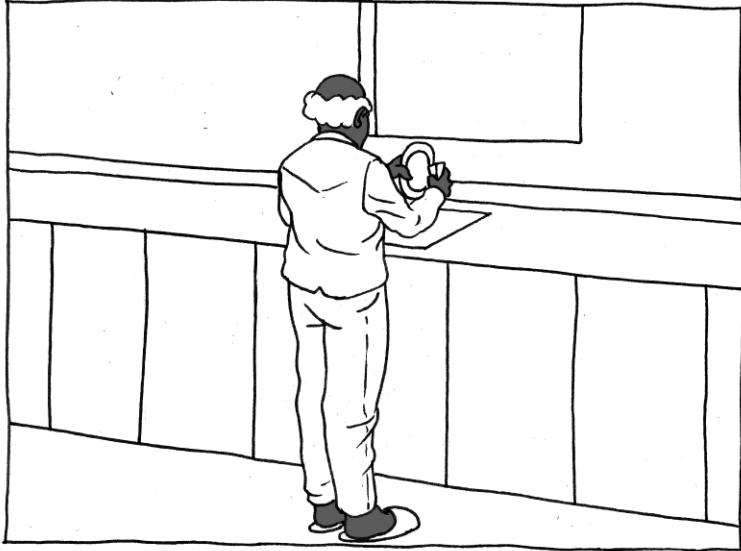
Living on his own means that Amobi sometimes needs help from his neighbours to complete some tasks he finds difficult,

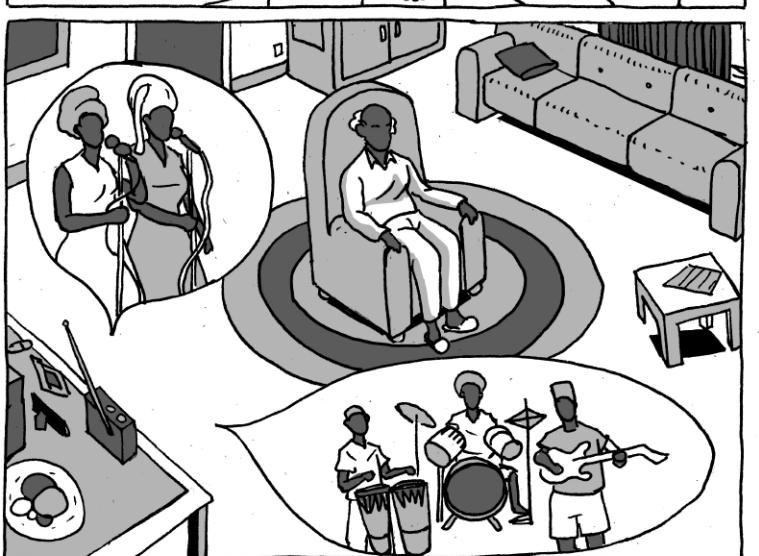
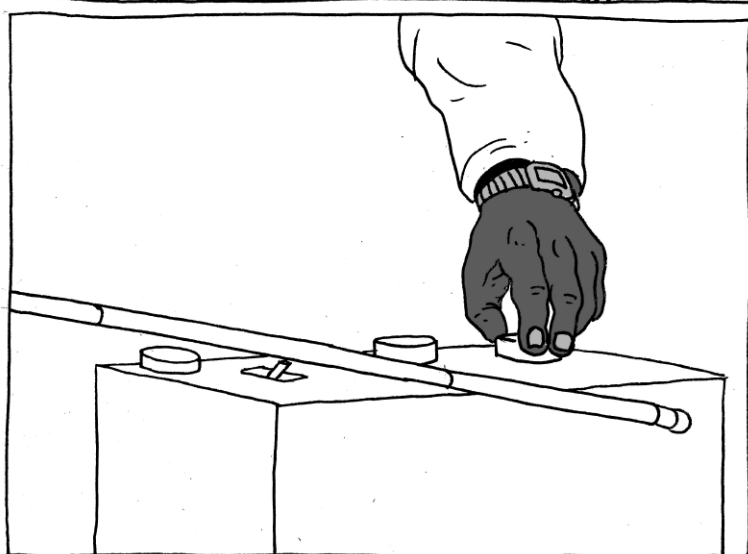
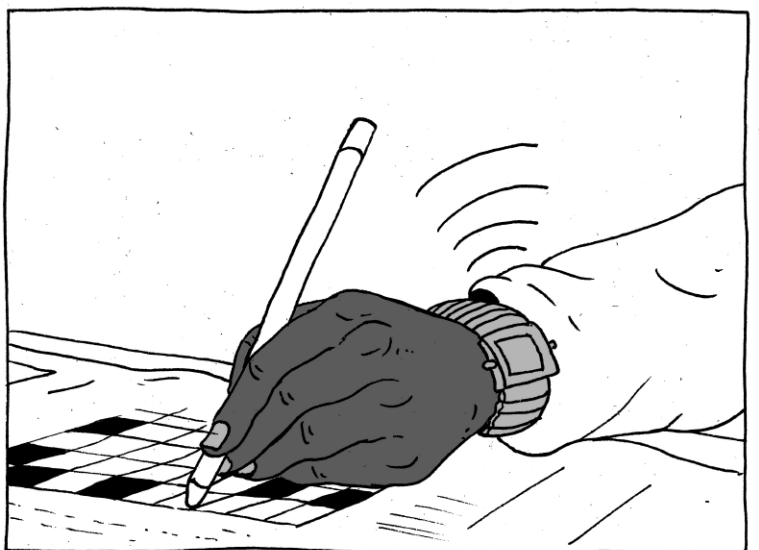
such as putting his bins out each week. Sometimes a neighbour will collect groceries for him, and Amobi feels secure knowing that there are people round and about who keep an eye out for him and every so often call in to see how he is.

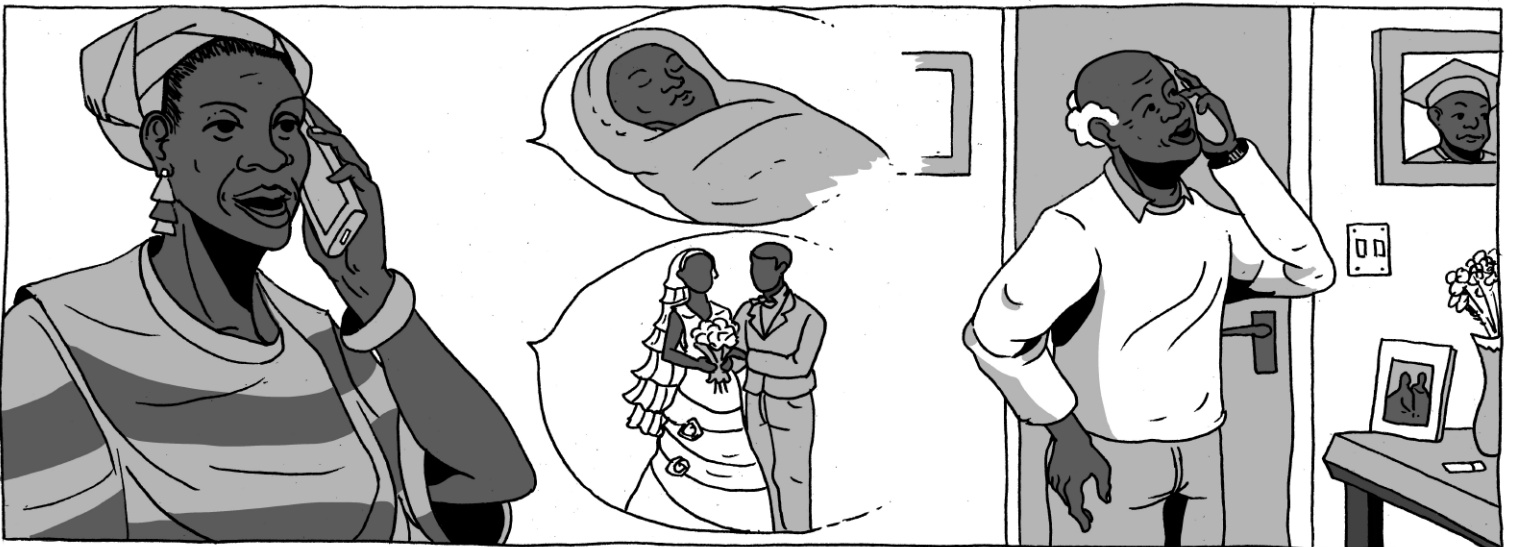
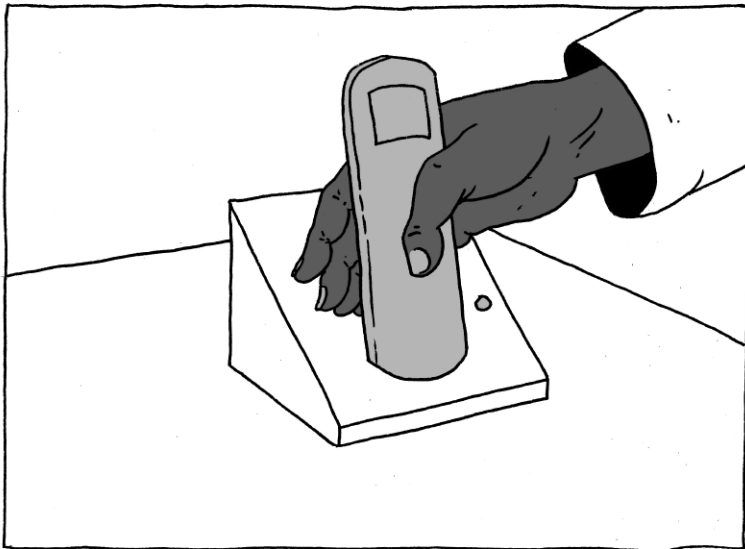
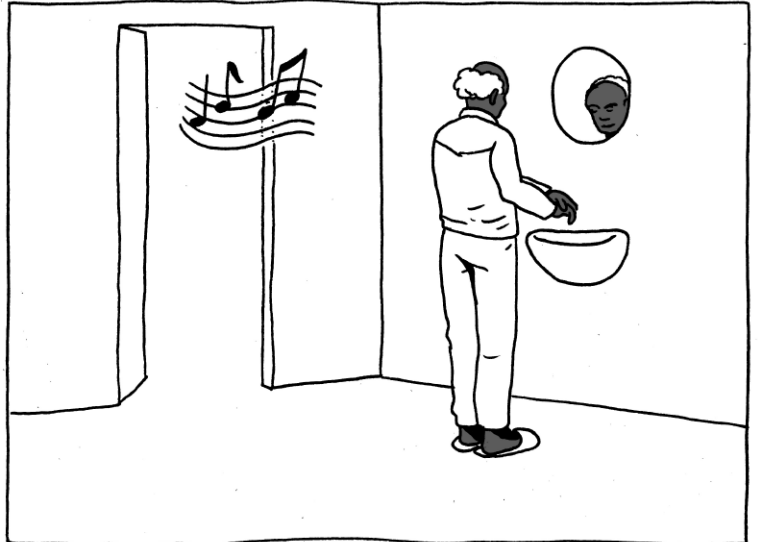
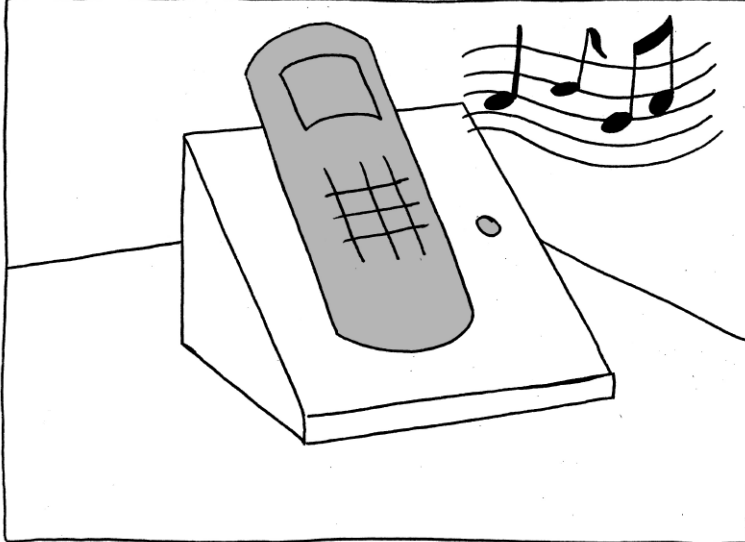
People living with dementia are still able to support others and offer kindness. Because Amobi is often at home, he is a helpful neighbour to those in his street who are out at work during the day and he will take in parcels for people and hold onto them until they pop round to collect them. People living with dementia play a role in maintaining the social life of local places, undertaking small acts of kindness themselves for neighbours and friends. He enjoys having his neighbours pop by, and is often keen for them to stay for a cup of tea if they have time.

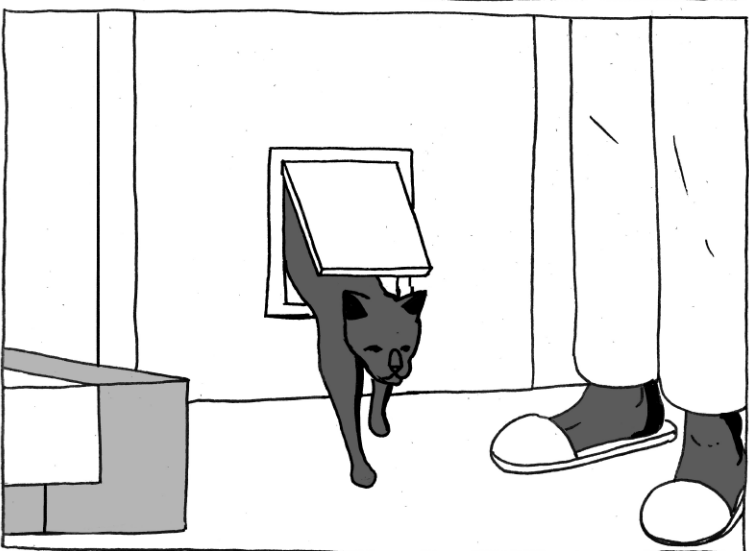
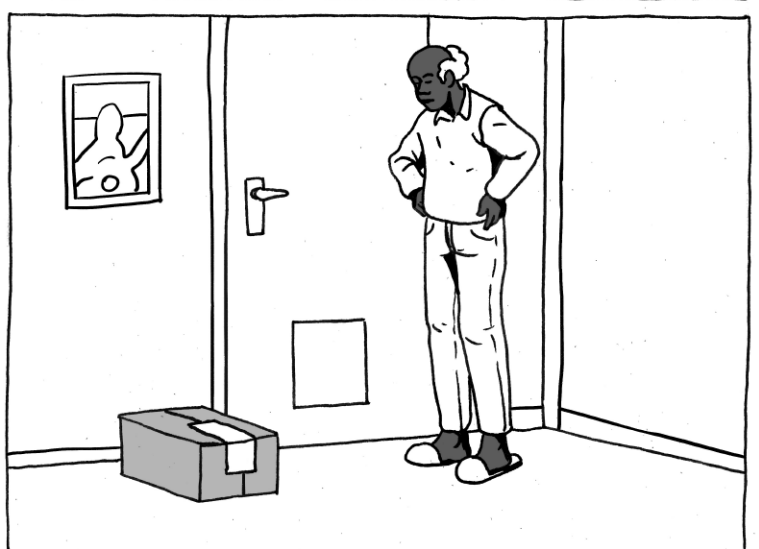
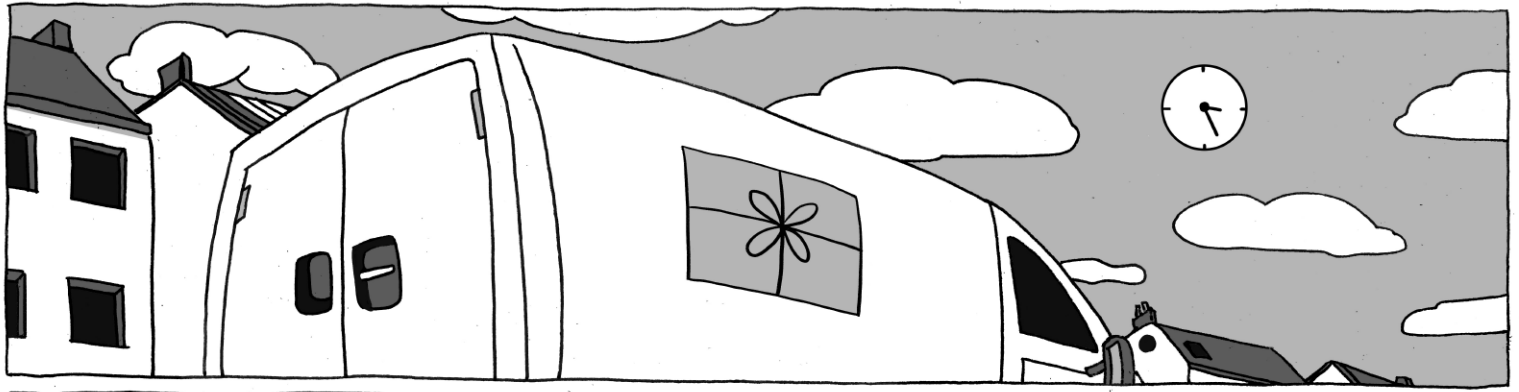
Although Amobi spends most of his time at home, he still feels connected to the outside world. He continues to be a good neighbor and maintains a friendly relationship with others who live on his street. Although he would not describe his neighbours as friends, he feels a little bit safer knowing that there are people nearby who keep an eye out for him and who are there for him if he needs a bit of support. Amobi still feels like a valued member of his family. It is important to keep in contact with people who are living with dementia and it can be a source of comfort to get phone calls and receive visitors to their home. We hope that this story helps you to think about how people living with dementia can remain an important part of their neighbourhoods even when they are able to get out and about less often than they used to. It is important to find ways to keep people included in everyday life.

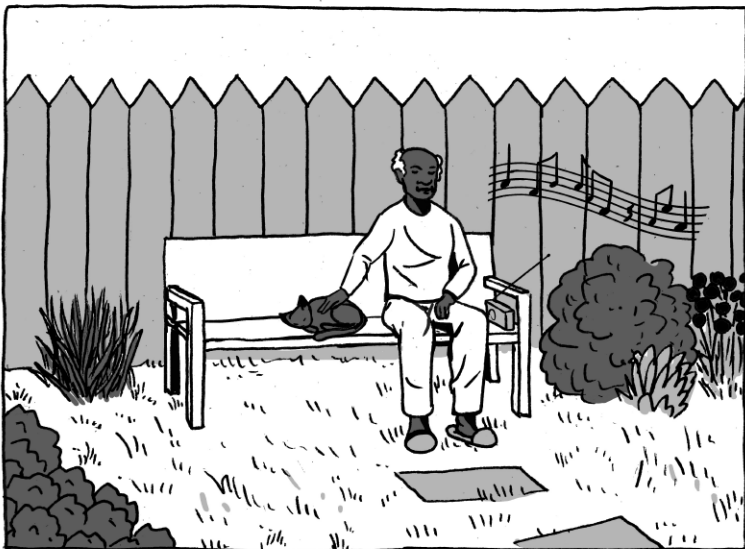
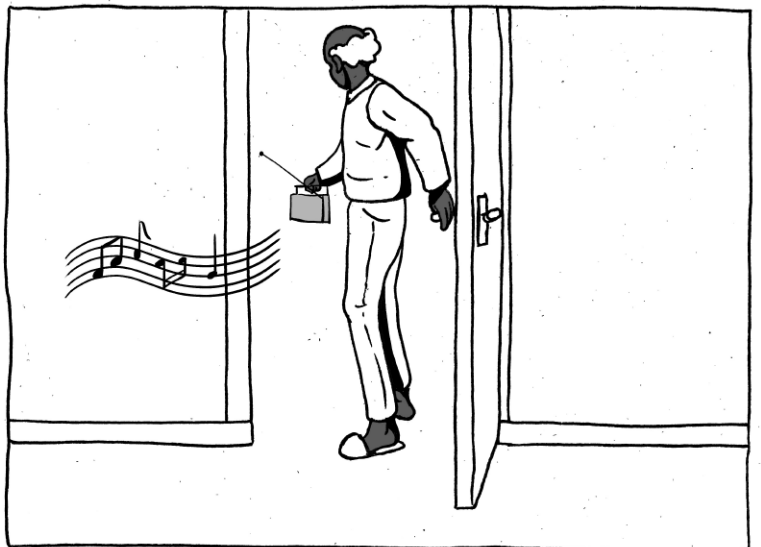
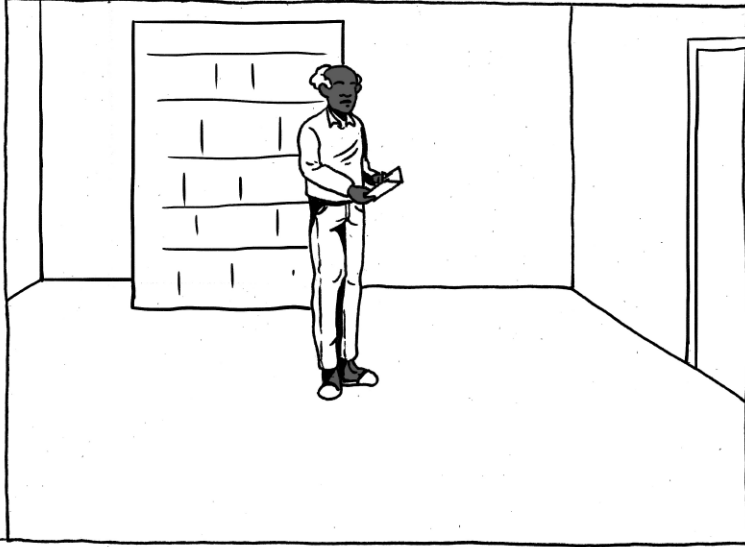


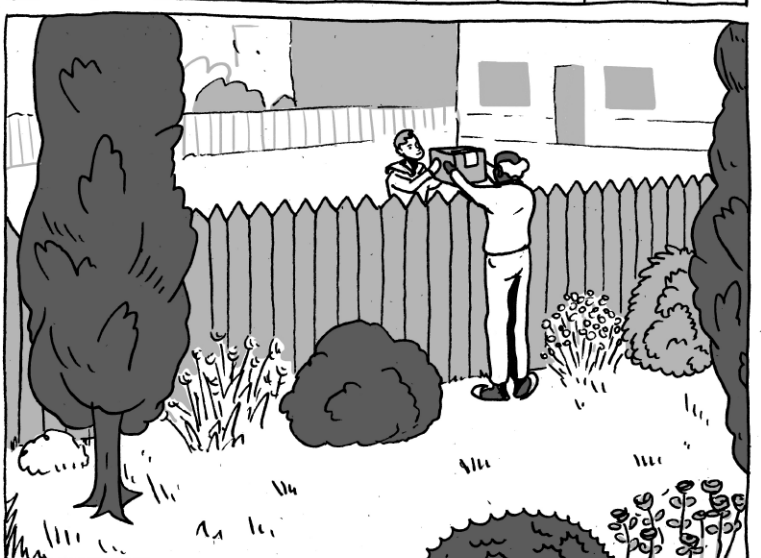
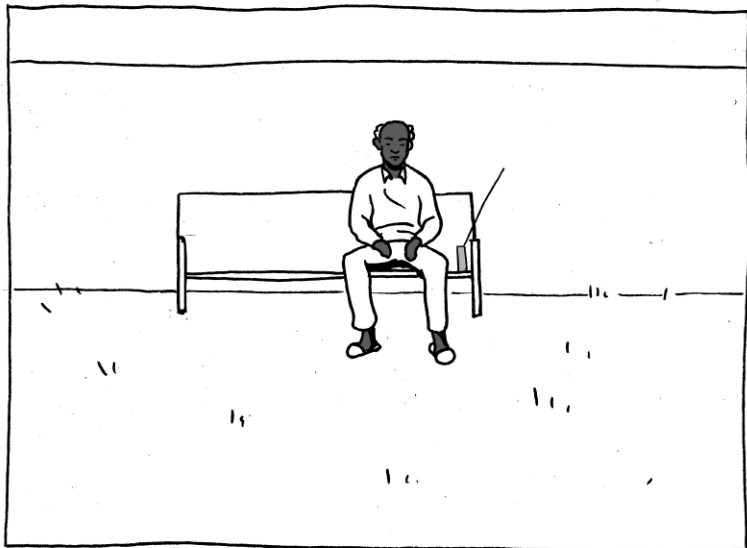
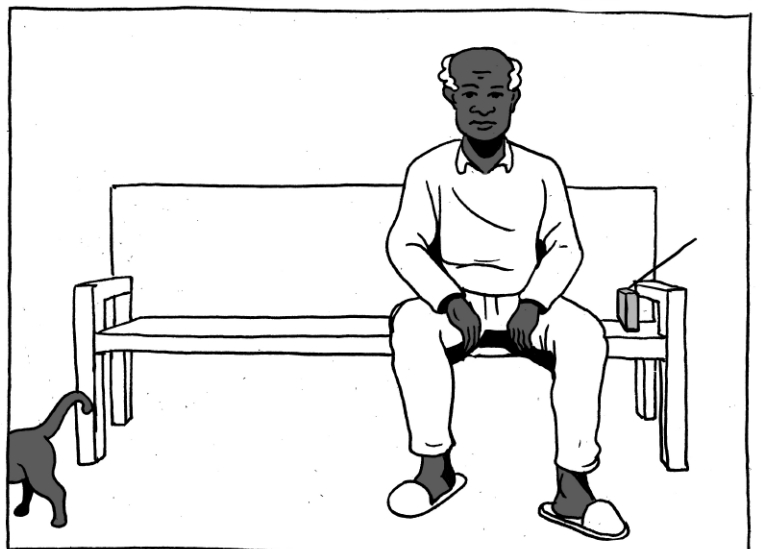
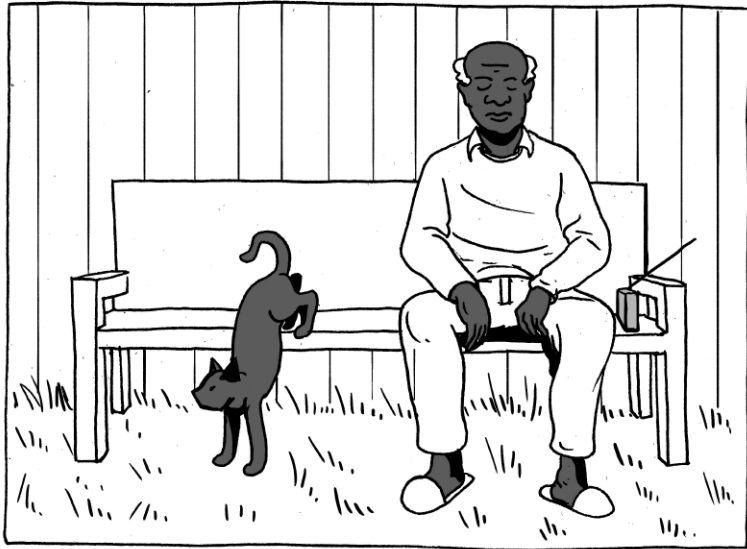
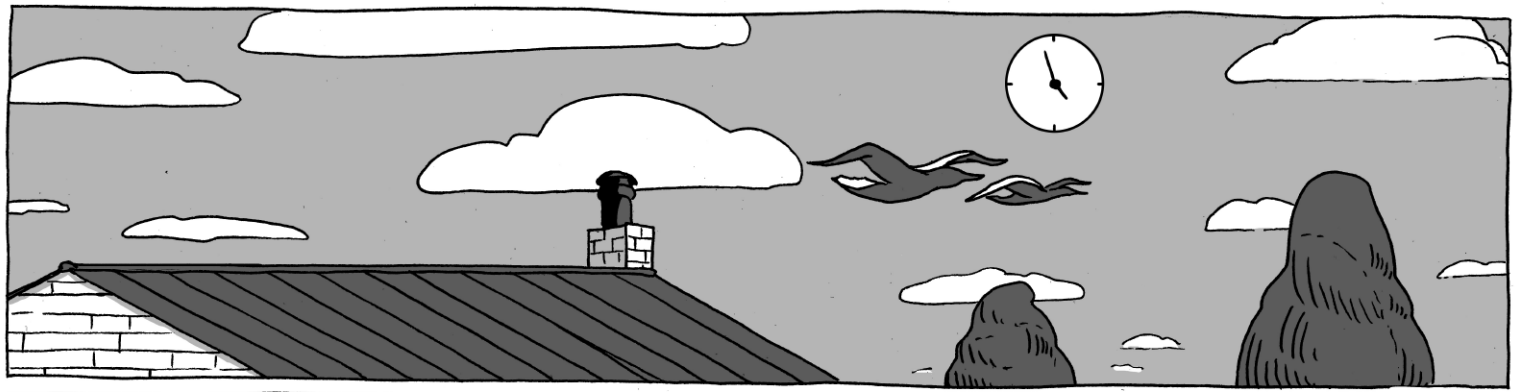


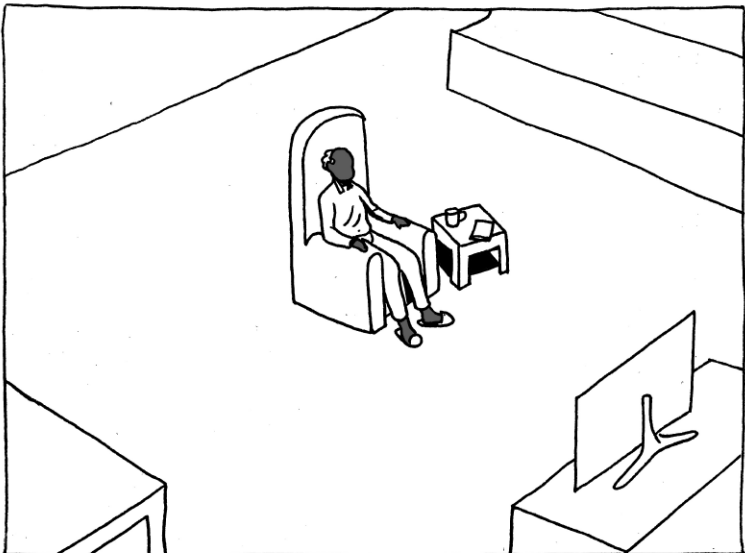
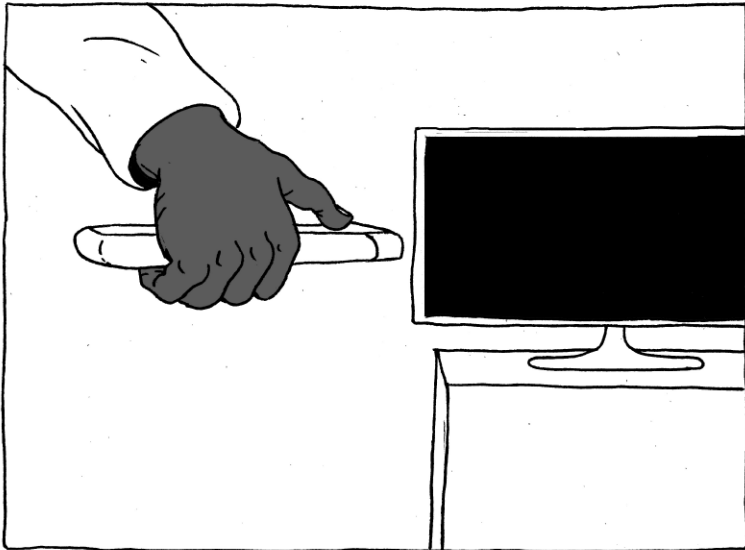
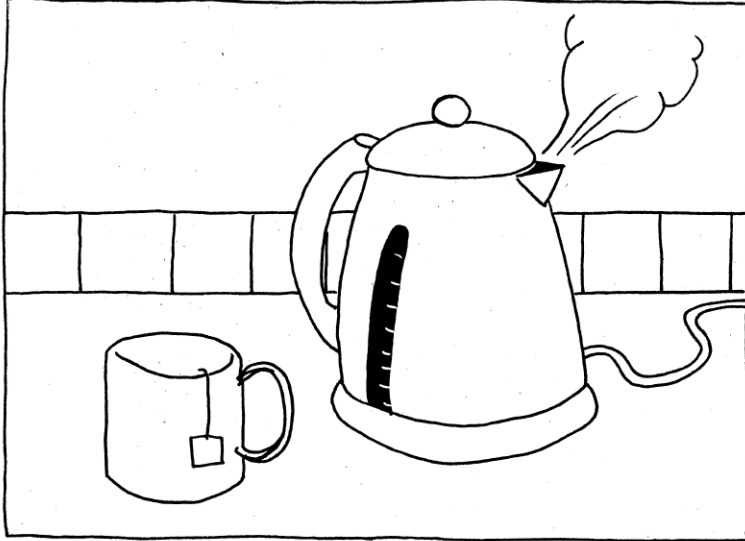












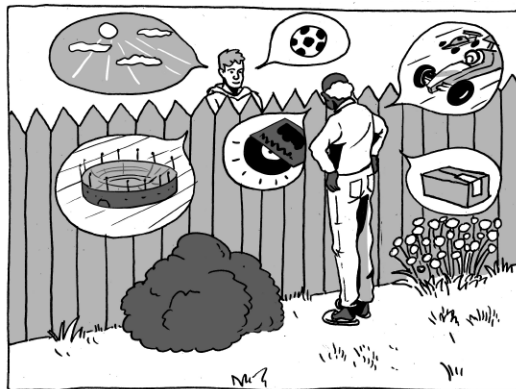


Dementia Support Day to Day

People with dementia can feel vulnerable as their condition progresses and they increasingly rely on other people to do things for them and with them. It is important that people who have dementia feel reassured and supported, while retaining some level of independence. Local places can play a role in this.

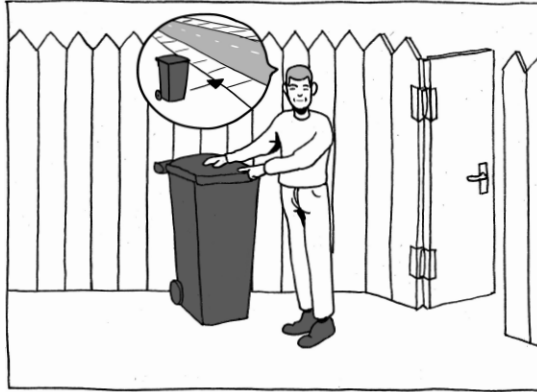
There is currently no known cure for the condition and although some symptoms are common to many people with dementia, each person's experience of living with dementia, and how they cope with it will be different. These ideas and suggestions will not suit everybody, and they are small in scale and scope. But they have been suggested to us by people who are living with dementia or supporting others with the condition as ways in which they try to keep as independent as possible.

Staying in: If you are less able to get out and about it is still possible to enjoy connections to others through visitors to your home, chatting on the doorstep or over the garden fence. Sometimes enjoying the sounds of the neighbourhood, or the feel of sunshine through the window can be equally important. Visitors to their homes were a vital connection to the neighbourhood. Even a neighbour popping by, a chat over the garden fence or a conversation with a delivery person all have a part to play. Being able to see and hear the goings on can help. Sitting in the front garden or near a window are small ways in which people can feel more connected to others.



Try to stay connected:

Neighbourhoods are about people as well as places. Local relationships can provide important everyday support as well as assistance in times of need. Neighbours can be a useful point of call, from taking out



rubbish to keeping an eye on someone. Local businesses and services can help maintain a sense of being connected. Sometimes it can help to carry a card to let others know that you have dementia. There is information about these found here:

https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/info/20113/publications_about_living_with_dementia/774/helpcards

Neighbourhood routines: Try to keep up habits and routines to help stay connected locally. These might be regular dog-walks, visiting the same cafés, regularly attending a dementia support group, or even a short walk along a familiar route. These help you to become recognized locally and to create a sense of belonging. Visiting local shops regularly such as to the Bakers or Newsagents can foster friendly local relationships. Attending local dementia groups can be an important way to stay connected, to create new routines and to meet new people. Local businesses can help customers feel welcome, providing assistance with money, help making purchases, or just by being patient or letting someone sit for a while on their premises.

Little acts of kindness:

Kindness helps people to maintain independence, feel connected, be cared for and give something back. Acts of kindness are often carried out without comment and enable people to continue to live independently. People



living with dementia can reciprocate support and play their own role in supporting the social life of local places. Try to continue to contribute to your own neighbourhoods, visit local shops, keep an eye out in your street, and continue to care for other family members, friends, or pets in whatever ways you can.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank:

All the participants from across the three fieldsites.

Our advisory groups

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