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## Silence is golden for charity fundraiser

NHS worker Debra Smith is lost for words after raising almost £1,500 for charity.

Mrs Smith, a domestic assistant at South Tyneside District Hospital, did a sponsored silence in aid of Newcastle-based Daft as a Brush.

The charity offers a free transport service to and from the Freeman and Royal Victoria Infirmary Hospitals in Newcastle for cancer outpatients from all over the North East, and beyond, undergoing chemotherapy and radiotherapy treatment. Mum-of-two Mrs Smith, 55, of South Shields, found out in 2015 that she had breast cancer. Following surgery at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Gateshead and chemotherapy at South Tyneside, Daft as a Brush provided transport every day for 15 days so she could have radiotherapy at the Freeman Hospital.

“They are absolutely fantastic and without their help I don’t know how I could have got to Newcastle and back so often,” she said. “It was so stress-free: they came to pick me up and, as soon as my treatment was finished, they took me home without me having to wait around.

“Having used the Daft as a Brush transport service myself, I wanted to do something to give back and show my appreciation. I’m a good talker and everybody takes the mickey out of me for it so I decided to do a sponsored silence. It was only for six hours but no-one believed I could do it and the money just came rolling in from family members, friends and colleagues. I was amazed when I got £1,140 in sponsorship, with the rest of the money coming from people paying £1 for a domino card game.”

Trustee with Daft as a Brush, Brian Burnie, said: “Debra is a lovely lady; taking her to and from hospital was a real pleasure as she was a chatterbox.”  
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*Pictured above: Daft as a Brush’s Brian Burnie accepting the bumper cheque from Debra Smith*

Issued on behalf of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust by Kay Jordan

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