

# Wandsworth Older People's Forum Newsletter

## Spring 2016



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## Should Pension Increases be Used to Provide Funding for Social Care?

The Chief Executive of the NHS told the *Guardian* newspaper (18.01.2016) that the government needs a plan to ensure the billions of pounds that will be required to meet the health needs of an ageing population. Simon Stevens suggested that the current triple lock on the old age pension, which ensures that it goes up in line with the cost of living, could be loosened in order to spend more money on social care.



He went on to express his concerns that the health service will be unable to cope if older people do not have access to more support from social services to reduce hospital admissions and speed up discharges. Loneliness and isolation have also been identified as neglected problems that put pressure on the NHS. In order to address this, the NHS boss wants the political parties to agree a strategy to invest in social care and prevent the health service from being overwhelmed by the time of the NHS 70th birthday in 2018.

It would be interesting to know whether older people themselves would be prepared to forgo guaranteed pension increases, if, in return, they could be sure that adequate social care would be available.

The Government responded to Mr. Stevens by claiming that it was addressing the issue by enabling Councils to raise rates in order to fund an adequate social care service. However, some organisations such as the Local Government Association, the King's Fund and Age UK have criticised the 2% levy on council tax as unlikely to raise sufficient funds to meet the escalating needs.

**age UK**  
Love later life

Age UK has started a new telephone service to help reduce social isolation. The service is for people who are aged over 60, live alone or are a carer for someone else and feel lonely and would feel comfortable having a chat on the phone. Ring 0800 434 6105 for support or volunteering.



**Autumn Rose in Balham** (Part of Wandsworth Resilience Project see p.7) runs a healthy eating project as part of the CCG funded Resilience Project. Participants learn how to make healthy dishes



and enjoy eating together. For more info contact Joan: 020 8673 8038. Tuesdays only

# **Elections for a new London Mayor**

Age UK London held a hustings for older people on 25th February and we will report the outcome in our next issue. Meanwhile we thought readers may be interested in the London Age UK Manifesto which was developed by older people for 2012 –2016.

## **1      Stereotypes and diversity**

Challenge stereotypes, celebrate London's diversity and highlight older people's contribution to society.

## **2      Transport**

Address travel accessibility issues and maintain access to the Freedom Pass, ensuring that it is not means-tested.

## **3      Crime and safety**

Maintain or increase a visible police presence and empower – as well as assist – older people in relation to crime.



## **4      Housing**

Help older people to stay in their homes, which should be easy to heat and suitable for changing needs. Address the needs of older homeless people.

## **5      Health and social care**

Champion high-quality, culturally appropriate services for older people, tailored to their individual needs and wishes.

## **6      Employment and volunteering**

Give older people the necessary support to find employment, and equal access to training, employment and volunteering opportunities.

## **7      Street design**

De-clutter streets and include suitable seating and clearly signed public toilets in street design,



to encourage older people to get out and use local facilities.

## **8      Fitness and leisure**

Help lift financial and physical access barriers so that Londoners, irrespective of age, disability or means, are able to participate in London's cultural, leisure and intellectual life.

## **9      Information**

Make information on London's facilities and services accessible and easily available in a range of written formats, as well as electronically.

## **Candidates standing for London Mayor**



Zac Goldsmith  
Conservative



Caroline Pigeon  
LibDem



Siân Berry  
Greens



Sadiq Khan  
Labour

Peter Whittle—UKIP and a number of independent candidates are also standing for election

## **WANDSWORTH CARERS' CENTRE**

Wandsworth Office: 181 Wandsworth High Street, London SW18 4JE Tel 020 8877 1200

Balham Office: 46 Balham High Road, London SW12 9AQ Tel 020 8675 0811 Calls welcome via text relay

Email [info@wandsworthcarers.org.uk](mailto:info@wandsworthcarers.org.uk)  
Website [www.carerswandsworth.org.uk](http://www.carerswandsworth.org.uk)

Wandsworth Carers' Centre provides support and information to people who are caring for an older or disabled person.

You may join a group of people in a similar situation, learn more about what the person you are caring for needs, gain advice about benefits and respite care or simply relax and have a chat.



**Lilias Gillies** represented the Forum at a meeting about the Council's service for Safeguarding older people. Nationally, approximately 2.5% of older people report some form of mistreatment by family members, carers or close friends. The most prevalent form of abuse is **Financial abuse** where an older person may be forced by children to sell their house against their will or be persuaded

## Safeguarding Elders

to part with sums of money they cannot afford.

The next most common are **psychological and physical abuse or neglect**.

Harassed carers may shout at older people, bully them, threaten them or simply leave them with insufficient food, warmth and personal care. In rarer cases, older people may suffer **sexual abuse or institutional abuse** in care homes or hospitals.

Wandsworth, like all local authorities, has a **Safeguarding Board** with repre-

sentatives from the police, social services and other agencies whose role is to ensure that cases are dealt with sensitively and in the best interests of older people and their families. Sometimes, criminal behavior has to be stopped and the perpetrator may be prosecuted but, more often, the council provides support in partnership with the family and other agencies to ensure the older person is safe and well cared for.

If you have any concerns, **contact the adult social care Access Team: 020 8871 7707**

## Continuing to Learn and to Play

Jane Castle of Wandsworth U3A contributed to WOPF's Living Well Conference in February.

(See p5). Jane told Conference that the University of the Third Age, known as U3A, is a national organization founded in 1981 and currently with 1,000 groups. The Wandsworth branch was started in 2002 and has 340 members.



Monthly meetings are held on the third Monday of the month from 2pm to 4pm in the Penfold Centre, but new premises are being sought because the meetings are so well attended that it is now too crowded.

The criteria for membership is that you are either partly or fully retired. Members pay £16 per year to join and can then enjoy one or more of 40 different activity groups. These include crafts, languages, ambles, long walks, music, visits to theatres and galleries, summer schools etc. It is an opportunity to revisit activities you enjoyed before work took over or to try completely new things. All activities are planned and run by the members themselves—there are no 'teachers' or exams. People make new friends and find fun fulfilment and community.



## Doctor Emergency Service

Wandsworth NHS have announced the introduction of a South West London Rapid Access Doctor



scheme, now available in Wandsworth. The new care pathway will operate 7 days a week, between the hours of 13:00 and 01:00. Four cars will be working across six South West London areas, equipped with a GP and driver to respond to patients with urgent healthcare needs in a community setting.

The scheme aims to reduce unnecessary A &E attendances and admissions by providing rapid assessment, diagnosis and treatment by a GP. Where appropriate, patients who have called 999 will be referred to the Rapid Access Doctor team following an assessment by London Ambulance Service staff. A record of the call with the outcome will be sent to the patient's own GP within the next working day.

# Your Day Your Say

On November 18th, 200 carers and users of Wandsworth Adult Care Services gathered in the Civic Centre to hear about progress from the Director, Dawn Warwick and to discuss the benefits of employing your own personal assistant. The main speaker was a disabled campaigner called Ann Macfarlene OBE who told the conference about how her independence had been enhanced by using a personal assistant.



Participants discussed some of the barriers that needed to be overcome before service users would feel confident to

manage their own PAs –mainly to do with bureaucracy and taking responsibilities they may find hard to manage. Another problem is the lack of a user led organisation locally similar to the one that Ann described where users can help and advise each other and help with commissioning. Staff from Wandsworth Council expressed their commitment to supporting such an organization although, without funding, this will be a challenge.

Peter West from Wandsworth HealthWatch talked about the importance of monitoring the quality of care services and explained how HealthWatch volunteers go into Care Homes and hospitals to speak with users and carers.



## WOPF XMAS CELEBRATIONS



In December members celebrated the 10th anniversary of Su Elliott as our wonderful administrator. Su organises all our meetings, finds speakers, represents us at important forums and we all enjoy her wicked sense of humour.



Charis Hanning, professional pianist playing at members' Xmas meeting.

## The Jasmine Café

The café is held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of every month from 1:30 to 4pm at St Michael's Day Centre, Cobham Close, SW11 6SP.

We welcome people with dementia and their families to come for an informal chat. Buses 319 and G1 stop on Northcote Road, 5-10 mins walk.



# WOPF NETWORK CONFERENCE ON AGEING INDEPENDENTLY

Maintaining independence and enjoying life was the subject of WOPF's Network Conference attended by 45 participants.

**The absence of suitable affordable retirement housing** was identified as a key issue. Mick Morrell, director of the Furzedown Project sent a message to the conference about the importance of ensuring that your home is suitable—not just for now but for when you become frail. You need ground floor or lift accessible bedroom, toilet, shower room and kitchen to ensure safety and comfort and prevent need for residential care.

**Maria Bren-tton of the UK co-housing network** told conference that she had been working with a group of women for thirteen years to establish a project, shortly to open in Barnet, where people who have chosen to live together and support each other will purchase or rent their own flats with shared garden and laundry. Such schemes are common in Scandinavia and the States but the infrastructure and housing costs in UK make it very hard for the 12 cohousing groups in the country to achieve their goals.



**Lucy Ashworth occupational therapist, Claire McMahon, social worker and Beverly Loader (right to left in photo) all from Wandsworth Social Services** spoke about ways to help people remain independent in their homes.

**Lucy** said that if people needed aids or adaptations they could refer themselves or go through a carer or a GP via the Access team. Some equipment can be obtained without SS intervention such as Age UK handy person service who put in simple rails free of charge, exercise classes and falls service that help with fitness/balance and pharmacies who now stock a number of useful aids and adaptations. However, if someone has had a stroke, become a wheelchair user or developed serious disabilities, more large scale adaptations may be offered. This service is means tested so a financial assessment would apply.

**Beverly** explained that her role was to support people who were struggling with ac-

tivities of daily living to get back on their feet. This is usually people who have come out of hospital who are helped with personal care, medication, cooking, shopping or going out. This is a free service expected to last for about 3-4 weeks.

However, if more long term help is required, a referral is made for a full assessment.



**Claire** explained that under new legislation, anyone in need of care or any carer is entitled to an assessment of their needs—although this is hard to achieve in the context of reduced funds. People can be signposted to where help is available, or, if eligible and following a financial assessment, may receive support via social services.

In response to questions raised by participants, it was acknowledged that waiting times for the financial assessment are long but attempts are being made to fix this. Help is available to complete complex finance forms. People eligible for care who struggle with the process are entitled to an advocate, and help can be provided with steps leading to the road but not to the garden.



# **FIT, ACTIVE, INVOLVED AND INTERESTED**

**Asian Women's Association**  
020 8875 9465

**Wandsworth Over 50s Activity Group** 07958440808

**Share Community** for adults with physical and other disabilities. 020 7924 2949

**St. Bede's Centre for Deaf people** 020 7021 4340

**Golf for over 50s** 020 8871 2468.

**St. Michael's Older People's Activity Centre Battersea**  
020 7228 024

**Expert Patients group**— understand and manage condition or illness 020 8871 5163

**Keep on Moving (60+)** FRIDAY 2-3PM £3 Southfields Library, Wimbledon Park Road, SW19 6NL

**Walk 4 life** — free walks Battersea Park Thursdays 10 30, Tooting Common 9am or 12 noon Tuesdays St. George's Park 12 15pm Weds. Roehampton Lane by Shell garage 1st Sunday in the month at 10 30 am. Details 8871 6371

**Tai Chi** MONDAY 12.30-1.30PM . St John's Hill Community Centre, Peabody Estate, Battersea, SW11

**Lunch club** with social activities) Thursdays at the Penfold Centre (nr Southside Shopping centre), Call Rachel 07538713409

**Sunday afternoon tea parties for people aged 75+** Tel: Alison Minney 020 8150 3154

**Furzedown Project for older people**—020 8677 4283 Check us out on YOUTUBE

**Ramblers** 0207 9242949

**Hestia Age Activity Centre** 020 8767 8426

**Katherine Low Settlement** meeting place, advice, support, exercise & activities for older people 020 7223 2845/6471

**Pocklington Resource Centre** for People with Visual Impairments 020 8675 4246

**Line Dancing for Over 50s** Weds and Thurs, 10-12 St John's Hill Centre, Peabody Estate, St John's Hill, SW11.

**Keep Fit (50+)** FRIDAY 10.30-11.30AM St John's Hill Com Cent

**Keep on Moving (50+)** TUESDAY 10.30 - 11.30AM and FRIDAY 9 45 and 11 15 at The Penfold Centre, 1 Neville Close, SW18 4TJ (opposite King George's Park)

**Autumn Rose** invites you to their health and well being project: talks and cooking demonstrations. To book: Joan or Esmie autumnrose@balhamsda.org.uk

**Regenerate-Rise** open access day centre, Putney Tel 020 8780 9330

**Line Dancing** Newlands Hall Putney Vale Tuesdays 11am -12.30 1st week free then £5 per week

**Active Lifestyles** for info on a range of fun activities 0208 871 6373

**U3A (university of 3rd age)** Learning through groups such as language, history, art, theatre, walks 020 8878 5783

**Socialising in Roehampton.** For more info contact Mac 07715131813

**Keep Fit for Life (50+)** TUESDAY 11AM-12PM £3 Tooting Junction Baptist Church, Longley Road, SW17 9LD

**MONDAYS** Swim Club at Balham pool (contact Furzedown Project above)

**Tone & Stretch (50+)** FRIDAY 11AM-12PM £3 St Josephs Catholic Church, 218 Roehampton Lane, SW15 4LE

## **Age UK Services**

- Advice /information (Mon-Thur) phone for appointment: 020 8877 8949
- Befriending
- Handyperson (£15 per hour) but grab rails and light bulb change is free
- Help getting out and about.

# Wandsworth Community Resilience Project

**The Resilience Project has been running for over a year and is funded by the local NHS and managed by Wandsworth Age UK**

**The purpose is to improve the quality of life for older people by enabling them to feel valued and to be proactive in gaining tools to improve and maintain their own physical and mental health through reducing isolation and increasing confidence. Because it is the voluntary sector that can best support older people to achieve these aims, a key goal is to develop a resilient voluntary sector, able to co-operate and coordinate services which complement those provided by other sectors in the borough.**

**The Project is managed by Helen Gibson who works through a steering group of representatives from the health service, WOPF and participating voluntary organizations to allocate funding and support the projects, some of which are featured here and on page 1. A hoped for outcome is that Well Being Hubs will eventually be accessible across Wandsworth where older people can undertake exercise, learn about healthy life styles and participate in other activities that increase their resilience. From the NHS perspective, it is hoped that this may help reduce unnecessary GP visits or A & E attendances.**

**For further information and full list of projects contact Helen gilbert@ageukwandsworth.org.uk**

## Chair Based Exercises

These exercises are very beneficial for people whose mobility problems prevent them from doing other exercises. Katherine Low Settlement offers classes every week to improve mobility, health and well being. Members of the class often choose to stay on for a healthy meal with our lunch club! Our members particularly enjoy the social aspect of our sessions. People who were initially referred by health care professionals are now regular 'lunch clubbers' as well as joining our Contact Club, trips and activities. One member recently said that coming to KLS via the exercise classes has "transformed her life". Another member told us " There are classes at St George's but it's just about the exer-



cise, here it's more social. I find out what's going on from the staff here at KLS."

Classes are: Thursday 10-11am Thursday 11-12pm (Full)  
KLS 108 Battersea High Street SW11 3HP **Tuesday 2:30-3:30**  
(transport available for Battersea residents) **R&E Centre, St.Rule Street SW8 3EH.**  
**For info contact Lucie Brooke**  
lucie@klsettlement.org.uk  
0207 223 2845

**Tooting Graveney Day Centre** offers classes on



Monday mornings from 12.30-1.30.

Natalie Gibson-Wilson, who has run the Centre for many years describes how she came to Britain expecting to return after five years "and here we still are 50 years later. We also got older, something else we didn't expect" says Natalie. This led to a need to reduce isolation which started with just offering a cup of tea on a Monday morning in



a church hall and now there is a Day Centre that offers knitting, crochet, exercise, bingo, cards, and Summer outings. It is sometimes hard to engage men in activities but dominoes does the trick here.

Tel: 020 3602 8251  
14-16 Lynwood Road  
London  
Mon & Thur 11-3pm



Reg. charity No 1096322

Correspondence to Hon.  
secretary

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*We're on the Web*

[www.wandspensforum.org.uk](http://www.wandspensforum.org.uk)



Affiliated to National Pensioners' Convention

### **Not So Gay**

Dave Robson, Chair of Wandsworth LGBT Forum, addressed WOPF Conference in Feb (See p.5) He told us that with the advent of Gay marriage and equality legislation, we forget that many LGBT Seniors recall horrendous discrimination, fear and even criminalisation. As older people, they are less likely to have partners or children and can be lonely and isolated. They may feel that they will not be understood by statutory services.

## **Forthcoming Forum Meetings**

**All meetings are held at the Anchor Centre, Garratt Lane between 2pm and 4pm unless stated.**

**12 April WOPF AGM with Council Leader Ravi Govindia**

**10 May Dick Tracey The role of the Greater London Association (GLA)**

**14 June Robyn Lynch—Solicitor (Expert in all legal matters related to older people)**

If you would like to join or re-join the Wandsworth Older People's Forum, please complete the subscription form below and return with your payment of £5 (annual subscription for individuals or organizations) to:

Membership Secretary Wandsworth Older People's Forum C/O WCEN, DRCA Charlotte Despard Ave, London SW11 5HD.

I wish to join the Wandsworth Older People's Forum

Name...(individual or organization)

.....  
Address

.....  
.....postcode.....

phone...(h).....

(mob).....

Email.....

I prefer correspondence/newsletter (tick preference)

by post

By e mail

I might be interested to volunteer

Make cheques payable to Wandsworth Older People's Forum

The LGBT Forum and WOPF will work together to try and find ways to support LGBT elders and campaign for services they need. Contact Wandsworth-LGBT@hotmail.co.uk or WOPF.

### **STOP PRESS!**

Government currently considering abolishing Attendance Allowance.