



# Wandsworth Older People's Forum

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2021

Questionnaire  
feedback  
page 6



## In this issue

- 1 Social care disappointment
- 2 Membership Secretary's column/ Forum reports
- 3 Volunteering is good for you
- 4 Claim your electricity rebate
- 5 Fit, Active, Involved & Interested
- 6 Questionnaire feedback & report
- 7 Sudoku/Useful tel nos
- 8 Join WOPF



**Wendy Speck**  
has taken over  
from Valerie  
Hambelton as  
Vice-Chair of  
the WOPF  
management

committee, although Valerie remains a valued committee member. Wendy said she knew some of the committee already and looked forward to getting involved.

**Shopping Tip** Those upset at not getting an 8% pension rise due to the scrapping of the triple lock may want to take a leaf out of the *Which?* shoppers handbook: It found the same basket of 23 branded and own-brand items cost £24.11 in Lidl, £24.54 in Aldi, £25.22 in Asda, £27.14 in Morrisons and £33.20 in Waitrose.

## Staying cautious over Covid

Even if you've been double-jabbed and had a booster shot, you should remain cautious. Open windows on the bus. Wear a mask if at all anxious. And go to GOV.UK (or tel 119) to order FREE packs of rapid lateral flow tests to check up on yourself regularly at home.

## Will social care **ever** get sorted?

The social care system has always been seen as unfair when put up alongside our national health system. So unfair that many older people are still shocked when, after a lifetime of working and paying taxes, they discover they must pay to go into a care home, even to the extent of selling the family home they wanted to leave their children.

It is an emotive issue that prompted Boris Johnson to pledge in the run-up to the 2019 election: "Nobody who needs social care will have to sell their home to pay for it."

For the social care system, unlike the NHS, is means-tested and – whether it's savings, property, income from a pension or benefits – all your circumstances are taken into account. Thus cancer patients get treated free in hospital (and that includes bed and board) while those with dementia may be paying care home fees of £700 a week (part of which is for bed and board, the so-called "hotel costs").

Exacerbated by the pandemic, our social care system is now buckling from years of neglect as well as government drives to privatise social care and starve local councils

of proper funding. Low pay and understaffing are rife, with staff shortages put recently at 112,000. So has Boris Johnson's plan, with £5.4bn directed at social care over three years, fixed things? Too little is being spent or changed to do that.

Even the headline announcement of a lifetime cap of £86,000 that an individual will spend on their care turns out, on reading the smallprint, not to be quite as it seems. Although half of the £5.4bn will be spent on the new cap (rather than on the existing strains in the system), it won't do much to achieve its aim of stopping people from having to sell their home.

First, the new system doesn't start till October 2023, so two years of care home fees will be paid on top. And second, when they say "care", they don't mean the total cost of going into a care home. Hotel costs won't count towards the £86,000. An individual may well have paid out £120,000 in care home fees by the time the cap is reached, and those hotel costs will continue.

Finally, as Sir Keir Starmer noted: "Where does the PM think [people] are going to get that £86,000 without selling their home?" *Vicky Hutchings*

## An inspector won't call

During the pandemic, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) "suspended [its] routine inspections" of care homes, relying mainly on people's "feedback about their experience of using them".

It has now said it **won't be going back to regular inspections**, and as a result will be "publishing fewer inspection reports and sending fewer

email alerts to subscribers". As *Which?* has noted: currently "half of the more than 14,000 care homes in England haven't been inspected in two years". The **Relatives & Residents Association**, the charity representing older people in need of care and their families, is calling for routine inspections to restart.

Go to: [www.relres.org](http://www.relres.org) or call 020 7359 8136 (Mon- Fri, 9.30-1pm)

# Fun with the Freedom Pass

I know how much we all value our Freedom Passes, but this year (Covid and lockdowns permitting) I've been using mine all over the place: in Nottingham, Brighton, Exeter, and only last week in County Durham – I like to look out of the window and listen to people's conversations.

My trip in the North-East was from Burnopfield into Newcastle and back – it's a little village in the middle of the county which amazingly has five buses that go from there to the toon, as we call it.

The bus on the way in was fabulous – spotlessly clean with lovely upholstery and very quick. I met an old friend and we poked about the shops, ending up at the Laing Art Gallery, which is beautiful with an eclectic mix of paintings. The toon was packed and I think we counted four sets of hen parties roaring through in the most wonderful array of costumes, each seeming to have a bride of above-average height,



so much so I was convinced a couple of them were drag artistes, though on closer inspection they were all women. Maybe it was the entourage that was below-average height, who knows?

On return, the bus station was heaving, but I eventually got on to one of the five buses. It was very full but the driver was happy to let everyone on. So much so that the two women behind me were incensed and felt compelled to bellow instructions to him. "You cannot let anybody else on, man!" "We're owwer full!" "You're daft, man, there's nee room. Howay!" "Only one got off, you can only let one on! Not FOUR, what d'you think yer deeing! We'll never gerrup Busty Bank like this!!"

Ah, Busty Bank, a name of delight to us children, and yes it does exist, in Rowlands Gill. And this is part of my argument for never stopping our Freedom Passes. Happy travelling.

*Su Elliott/Membership Secretary*



**Members' meetings are beginning again in October. Up till then, our invited speakers came to the Zoom meetings of the Forum's management committee**

At the July meeting, our speaker was **David Tidley**, Transport Manager at Wandsworth Council. He spoke about changes during the pandemic and how public transport was working at 60% capacity as people were still working from home. The reduction in numbers has resulted in a drop in TfL income which has been supplemented

by government grants that will continue to March 2022. There has been no reduction in the council's regular programme of pavement inspection, and air quality has improved with the change to electric vehicles. Sadiq Khan's Ultra Low Emission Zone will expand before too long to include northern parts of the borough.

The first speaker at the August meeting was the Wandle Valley Forum's **Vicki Carroll** who told the story of the Wandle River, once famed for its clarity and fish and later becoming a sewer. Each borough through which it flows is responsible for the care of the river in its area. In 1960, a trail was created and it is now possible to walk from Croydon and Carshalton to the Thames. Vicki had a major role in organising the annual Wandle Valley Festival from 2004-2014, with its talks, exhibitions, ▶

## Your questions answered on patient data collection

**The NHS is still planning to change how it collects and uses our data.** In a letter to GPs on 19 July, the then Health and Social Care minister Jo Churchill set out a new process for data collection while moving from a **previously fixed date of 1 September 2021.**

This was, she said, to provide more time to engage with GPs, patients, health charities and others and to "strengthen the plan".

### Why does NHS Digital need our data?

The NHS uses patient data daily, including data from general practice. This is used in many ways, from deciding where to provide new GP practices and clinics to informing guidance and government response. To find out more about NHS Digital, go to the website <https://digital.nhs.uk> and click on "About NHS Digital".

### What will my data be used for?

NHS Digital has said your data will be used, among other things, to:

- Monitor the long-term safety and effectiveness of care;
- Plan how to deliver better health and care services;
- Prevent the spread of infectious diseases;
- Identify new treatments and medicines through health research.

### Will my data be anonymous?

The data shared won't include your name or your address. Any other data that could directly identify you (such as NHS Number, date of birth, full postcode) will be replaced with unique codes produced by de-identification software before the data is shared with NHS Digital. This is called **pseudonymisation**.

### NHS Digital WILL collect:

- Data about diagnoses, symptoms, observations, medications, allergies, immunisations, referrals, test results, recalls & appointments, including info on physical, mental & sexual health;
- Data on sex, sexual orientation and ethnicity;
- Data on staff who have treated patients.

### NHS Digital will NOT collect:

- Name and address (except for the postcode in a coded form);
- Written notes, eg, details of conversations with doctors and nurses.

*Healthwatch*



► walks and “digs for kids”. Since then, Wandle Fortnight, run by the Wandle Valley Forum, has taken its place, finishing this year on 26 September. (See [www.wandlevalleyforum.org.uk](http://www.wandlevalleyforum.org.uk))

**Sarah Hill** spoke on how Walk Buddies grew out of the Wiser Collective, which was set up to link the generations, eg, to enable families with young children whose grandparents live far away to meet with older people whose store of life skills may be of use to younger people. When 6 people were allowed to meet outside in February 2021, it was decided that walks would be a good idea. One person would be available on either Tooting or Wandsworth Commons and people could book to join them for a short walk, no longer than 45 minutes. (See contact details on page 5.)

### Wandsworth Mediation's

Kirsten Dods said the charity was set up in 2004 to help people in conflict, either within a family, with neighbours or with others. The office is open Mon-Fri, from 9-5, with either Kirsten or Anna available to listen to the problem and offer mediation if it is appropriate. If not, they will recommend another service. (See advert opposite for details.)

**PC James Elvy** spoke about the rise in scams in the past 18 months, including offers of Covid vaccination, followed by a request for personal data such as bank details. The NHS will *never* ask for such details. Another is the parking-meter scam where the scammer pretends their bank card won't work in the meter and, proffering a new £20 note, asks the victim to do it for them with their own card. They or an accessory will then watch to find out the pin number and somehow distract the victim and steal the card by pretending the machine has swallowed it. Parking meters cannot swallow cards, so tell your bank immediately (then report it to [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)). The Met Police lists current scams at [www.met.police.uk/fraud](http://www.met.police.uk/fraud)

## Veterans are getting together

Age UK Wandsworth is running a series of activities aimed at military veterans, their partners and families, helping them to network and be more active in the community. Are you a veteran, did you do National Service or do you have a military connection in your family? If so, Age UK Wandsworth would love to hear from you.

### Upcoming events

Regular coffee mornings in the Age UK Wandsworth office every **Wednesday**;

**September** – Painting and walking trips, visit to Wisley Gardens by minibus;

**October** – afternoon tea party;

**November** – cinema trip;

**December** – Christmas show and a pub lunch.



Rolande and Vedalyn (above) at a recent coffee morning, pictured with plants donated by Wimbledon Tennis Foundation. They both have family veteran connections

Please contact AUW to find out how the organisation can support you.

Bryan Leao

Age UK Wandsworth, 549 Old York Road, SW18 1TQ. Tel: 020 8877 8942. [bryan.leao@ageukwandsworth.org.uk](mailto:bryan.leao@ageukwandsworth.org.uk)

## Why volunteering in old age is good for you

Known as “the helper’s high”, acting altruistically can give rise to a feeling of calm and well-being by releasing so-called “feel-good” endorphins in the brain.

These chemical changes also boost our self-confidence, self-esteem and overall satisfaction with life, according to scientists.

With loneliness in later life often a problem for older people – who may be missing work, or have outlived their friends or life partners, or whose families have moved a long distance away – it's an issue that Sylvia Carpenter, 75, a former consultant psychologist whose working life involved helping people with intellectual disabilities, knows only too well.

Speaking to the *Telegraph*, she said she found retirement “dull and frustrating” and now works at RSVP West, a charity offering companionship to anyone feeling isolated in the Bristol area. “As a psychiatrist for many years, I have no doubt the emotional benefits of volunteering are two-way.”



Pam Harris (left) started the 60+ Café in Roehampton, Putney 10 years ago and it now employs about 10 volunteers, most of them aged over 75. “Volunteering,” says Pam, “is one of the big motivators for the elderly.”

### Calling all volunteers



At Age UK Wandsworth, we are looking for volunteers to help coordinate some of our activities or to help on our reception desk. If you have a little time to spare on a regular basis and you'd like to help older people in our community, please look online at: [www.ageuk.org.uk/wandsworth/get-involved/volunteer/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/wandsworth/get-involved/volunteer/) Call 020 8877 8942 or email [bryan.leao@ageukwandsworth.org.uk](mailto:bryan.leao@ageukwandsworth.org.uk)

# It's great news!



You could get £140 off your electricity bill for this coming winter under the Warm Home Discount Scheme. The scheme opens on 18 October 2021. The discount will not affect your Cold Weather or Winter Fuel Payments.

There are two ways to qualify for the Warm Home Discount Scheme if, as of 4 July 2021, the following apply:

1) your energy supplier is part of the scheme\*; your name (or partner's) is on the bill; and you or your partner are getting the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit (even if you get Savings Credit as well). This is known as being in the **"core group"**.

2) Your energy supplier is part of the scheme\*; you're on a low income; you get certain means-tested benefits. This is known as being in the **"broader group"**.

## Core group

You'll receive a letter from the DWP telling you how to get the discount if you qualify. Your letter will say either you don't have to apply – you'll get the discount automatically – or to apply by 28 February 2022 – the letter will tell you why and how. Your electricity



**'Elderly in poorest neighbourhoods more than twice as likely to be inactive as in wealthier ones'**

As people in Wandsworth finished filling in their council surveys on "active travel", a report emerged from the Centre for Ageing Better and cycling charity Sustrans.

It found that what motivates those in their 50s and 60s to walk and cycle includes simply liking "being outdoors", the prospects of improving their physical and mental health, feeling independent

and in control, and preparing for an active retirement.

What stops them? Distances that are too great, bad weather, issues around safety, fear of traffic, a lack of confidence, declining health and/or disability and the lack of an "active travel" habit.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the research also showed people in poorer neighbourhoods are far less active than those in richer ones. "Aesthetic" qualities were cited: attractive streets, seating, small community parks, planters. The council survey began by asking for our postcodes. A very good place to start!

supplier will apply the discount to your bill by 31 March 2022. Contact the helpline on 0800 731 0214 if you don't get the letter by 31 December.

## Broader group

Your electricity supplier decides who gets the discount. The number of discounts is limited, so check with them as early as possible to see if you're eligible. Check even if you were eligible last year. Your supplier will then apply the discount to your bill by 31 March 2022.

*\*The "Big Six" (British Gas, Scottish Power, SSE, E.on, EDF Energy and nPower) are all members of the scheme. An increasing number of smaller suppliers also now participate, so please contact them*

## Ageing well in Wandsworth

Age UK Wandsworth has been awarded the contract by Wandsworth Borough Council to offer specialist day services from the Gwynneth Morgan Centre at East Hill, SW18 2HJ. The services will be for adults with eligible needs and will aim to maximise independence by offering social contact, stimulating activities, digital connectedness, community-based outreach work and person-focused low-level care.

Natalie de Silva, CEO of Age UK Wandsworth said: "The centre will be key to us realising our vision to help older people age well in Wandsworth."

Call 020 8877 8940 or email [info@ageukwandsworth.org.uk](mailto:info@ageukwandsworth.org.uk)



Resolve family conflicts with children and grandchildren, with the help of independent mediators.

please contact 020 7223 7744

[community@wandsworthmediation.co.uk](mailto:community@wandsworthmediation.co.uk)

or visit [wandsworthmediation.co.uk](http://wandsworthmediation.co.uk)

## Together on Climate Change Festival

Wandsworth will be holding an exciting festival of virtual and in-person events this November to raise awareness about climate change and what everyone can do to reduce carbon emissions and showcase the good work already happening across the borough. All events are aiming to be informative and family-friendly. There will be council-led events and activities alongside information sessions run by local groups, businesses and other partners, as well as pop-up shops/information hubs across the borough.

**From Monday 8 November to Saturday 13 November 2021**

If you have any questions, please contact Aimee Brough – Partnerships and Engagement Officer (Climate Change). Email: [togetheronclimatechange@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:togetheronclimatechange@wandsworth.gov.uk) Phone: 07929 862012





# Fit. Active. Involved and Interested

## Active Lifestyles

To book low-cost sessions now up and running for the over-50s, contact Enable Leisure & Culture (which manages leisure and sports for Wandsworth Council) on 020 3959 0033 or email [activelifestyles@enablelc.org](mailto:activelifestyles@enablelc.org). For more info and to keep abreast of changes, visit <https://enablelc.org/activelifestyles>

### Monday Keep on Moving with

**Annamarie** (50+) 10.30-11.30am. Online session via Zoom. £3

**Thursday Yoga with Will** 9.30-10.30am. Newlands Community Hall, Stroud Crescent, Putney Vale, SW15 3EP. £3

**Stretch & Movement with Will** 10.30-11.30am. Newlands Community Hall. £3

### Friday Tone & Stretch with

**Agnieszka** (50+) 11am-12pm. Roehampton Methodist Church, Minstead Gardens, SW15 4EB. £4

**Keep on Moving with Susan** (50+) 1-2pm. St Barnabas Church, 146 Lavenham Road, SW18 4EB. £4

**Saturday Chi Gung (Relax & Breathe) with Janet** 11.15am-12.15pm. Online session via Zoom. £3

**Active Chats (Age UK)** Free gentle seated exercises. For housebound over-60s with limited mobility. Tel Sorrel on 020 8877 8940 or email [exercise@ageukwandsworth.org.uk](mailto:exercise@ageukwandsworth.org.uk)

**Asian Women's Association** offers a drop-in service Tuesday and Wednesday for older women who want to meet up socially or seek advice. Talks given. Call 020 8875 9465 for further information

**Autumn Rose Over-60s Club** offers lunch/social day on Tuesday. 10.45-3pm. Starting again in October. Email [autumnrose@balhamsda.org.uk](mailto:autumnrose@balhamsda.org.uk) or call Joan or Esmie on 020 8673 8038 (Tuesday) or contact 07877 153 808.

**Furzedown Project** is open every weekday for a limited range of activities as at present we are still maintaining social distancing. 91-93 Moyser Road, SW16 6SJ. Call 020

8677 4283 and get on our mailing list for the latest news/updates.

**Hestia Age Activity Centre** for older adults. 966 Garratt Lane, SW17 0ND. Every weekday except Thursday, 10-4. A range of activities while at present still maintaining social distancing. For more info and to book, call 020 8767 8426.

**Katherine Low Settlement** offers a meeting place, advice, support, exercise and activities for older people. Call 020 7223 2845/6471.

**Lavender Bridge Club** meets at York Gardens Library Hall. Tea/coffee and cakes. Every Wednesday and Friday. Call Andrew on 020 8767 3886 or 07940 354203, or email [andrewstimson@yahoo.com](mailto:andrewstimson@yahoo.com)

**Monday Club** 2-3.30 on Mondays St Barnabas Church, SW18 5EP. Opportunity for over-50s to share refreshments and entertainment. Nominal charge. Call Margaret on 020 8870 5364.

**Open House in Southfields** A weekly social group for older people. Refreshments, cake, activities and trips out subject to social distancing. Every Monday, 10.30am-12pm in Ackroydon Hall, Montfort Place, SW19 6QL. For more info, call 020 8877 3003.

**Regenerate-RISE** open-access day centres in both Putney (020 8780 9330) and Battersea (020 7228 0245) providing lunches, activities including exercise classes, health and wellbeing topics, bingo and entertainment, plus an outreach programme. Currently limiting numbers, but if you are interested for the future, please do give us a call.

**Roehampton Community Shed (Age UK)** A weekly group where men (or women!) can meet and work on practical projects and enjoy a cup of tea and chat. For info on when this is reopening, contact Emma on 020 8877 8955.

**60+ Café** A warm and friendly cafe for the over-60s, held in Minstead Methodist Church SW15 4EB. Activities and food. Every Thursday,

11-4. Tel 020 8487 8285, email [admin@roehamptonmethodist.org.uk](mailto:admin@roehamptonmethodist.org.uk)

**Tooting Graveney Day Centre** Activities, exercise classes and lunch for older people, from 11-3, Mondays and Thursdays at 14-16 Lynwood Road, SW17 8SA. Tel 020 3602 8251 for details/prices.

**Wandsworth U3A** (University of the Third Age) is always friendly and welcoming. While many U3A groups continue to meet via Zoom, those offering guided and history walks, bird-watching and wildlife outings have begun to meet up again. Go to <https://u3asites.org.uk/wandsworth/home> where you can click on "Events" or "Contact" to get in touch.

**Walk Buddies (The Wiser Collective)** Intergenerational walks with neighbours. For info and to register for membership, go to <https://thewisercollective.com> or email [info@thewisercollective.com](mailto:info@thewisercollective.com)

**Walking Football (Age UK)** If anyone is interested in joining one of our mixed or single-sex teams in Battersea or Roehampton, please call 020 8877 8940 or email Sorrel at [exercise@ageukwandsworth.org.uk](mailto:exercise@ageukwandsworth.org.uk) for more info about dates/times. £5 a session. First game is FREE!

**Walk Wandsworth** Free walks in the borough. To book, contact Enable, Leisure & Culture (see top box for contact details)

**Battersea Park Tues** 10.30am (1hr) Meet at Battersea Adventist Church, Prince of Wales Drive.  
**Wandsworth Common Wed** 10am (30-45mins) Meet at back of the Skylark Café on the common.  
**Clapham Common Mon-Thurs** 7.30am (45mins) Meet by the green at Wix Lane School on Wix's Lane.

**Tooting Common Thurs** 10am (1hr) Meet at Dr Johnson Ave/Hillbury Ave junction (contact us first); **Sat** 8am & 10am (1hr) Meet at Tooting Bec Tube.  
**Southfields Wimbledon Park Thurs** 10.30am (45mins) Meet outside Elborough Street Surgery on Elborough Street.

# Q:report

By  
*Lilias  
Gillies*

The questionnaire was sent out in January 2021 by post to around 200 people and by email to about 200 more. It was suggested that people might pass them on to others. The pandemic has meant libraries and community centres etc were not allowed to have multiple copies, which has reduced the circulation of 4,000 to 900. Copies were added to the food deliveries which were still being delivered by Katherine Low Settlement, Age UK Wandsworth, Hestia Age Activity Centre and Regenerate-RISE.

Seventy people responded, most through having received the newsletter by post and only a few by email. Those receiving it by email may have found it tricky to copy, complete and return. Three respondents had got it through food deliveries.

## Newsletter

Respondents were asked what they enjoyed in the newsletter and only two said not much. Twenty-four (34%) said they enjoyed all or most of it. Of those who gave specific answers, 15 (22%) mentioned local stories (especially Su Elliott's column) and local information; 4 mentioned information about Covid, and there were single mentions of general legislation changes, the Freedom Pass and local initiatives. One said she did not care for articles that made her feel "inadequate".

Articles that members said they would like to see more of included crosswords and Sudoku (4 mentions); other people's stories (5 mentions); reviews of TV, radio and books all received 1 mention each, as did information on local care homes and sheltered housing and how to get there. One person said he wanted more information for LGBTQ+ people.

## Digital use

Thirty-seven people (53%) had the internet at home, 5 of whom also used the library; 4 others used the library only and one used somewhere else. We asked if people would like help to use the internet and 15 (22%) said yes and 15 said they did not want it.

## Living alone

We asked who lived alone and 44 (63%) said they did, with 30 (43%) in a bubble. There were 23 (33%) who lived alone not in a bubble.

## Getting out and about

There were 32 (46%) who said they did not get out and about as much as they would like, 22 of those because of Covid, either because of regulations or fear of mixing with other people, and 10 for reasons of frailty and/or poor mobility.

When asked about exercise, 52 (74%) said they took some form of exercise, while 13 (19%) said they did not. Exercise consisted of a wide variety of activities from a walk once a week to walking the dog, presumably every day. Exercise at home went from once-a-week chair-based exercises to Mr Motivator, which might have been every day. A number mentioned stairs and housework. One said she was doing "lovely Captain Tom's walk round my flat – very carefully".

When asked if they met people from other households, 22 (32%) said no or not so much nowadays; others met neighbours (4), attended church (4) and had chance meetings on walks (11) or in a communal garden (2). Two had virtual meetings on Zoom with friends. Nearly half (32) had felt lonely and an equal number said they had not, with many commenting on how they had many interests.

## Appointments with GPs

We asked people how easy it was to get appointments with their GP and 26 (37%) found it easy. Of the others, 11 found it not easy, 2 quite hard, 7 hard and 1 impossible, ie, 20 (29%) did not find it easy. The rest had had no reason to ask for an appointment. Forty-five (65%) had had an appointment: 34 (38%) by phone, 9 had visited the surgery, one had a video interview, and one had a home visit. Most had found it (by whatever means) satisfactory but four felt it was unsatisfactory. One had found it hard to phone and sent a letter -- to which they had had no response.

## What's important to readers

The replies were written in January, at the beginning of the second lockdown, and a low period for everyone. Normality seemed a long way off. When asked what would make their life easier or more enjoyable, most related it to wanting an end to Covid restrictions, classes to restart, centres to reopen and to being able to meet friends again.

When asked what the most important issue was for older people, 31 (48%) said loneliness and isolation and 14 (20%) said sorting out Covid so that we can all have access to friends again. Two thought the Freedom Pass was most important and two thought digital inclusion. There were single mentions of air pollution, property downsizing, sorting out social care, safe pavements and affordable housing for young people so they can remain near their families. One said "it [was] important to feel you belong to a community".

Five (7%) were aged 60-69, 24 (34%) 70-79 and 37 (53%) 80+, with 4 (6%) declining to say. Seventeen said they were male, 48 female and 5 did not respond. There were 8 Asian British, 9 black British, 41 white British, 8 European, 1 Chinese, 1 "human" and 2 non-responders.

## Comments on the Response *by Liliias Gillies*

The responses gave us a general picture of people longing to meet others and for an end to lockdown, although the majority seemed to have found a way to survive. There are suggestions for the newsletter that the Editor will take note of. The new committee elected at the AGM in June 2021 has been refreshed, with a wider representation including a link to those who are LGBTQ+. The Forum will continue to work with as many local organisations as possible and report back to members. The recently established training by several organisations for older people to get online with mentoring help has already allowed a number to get into the digital world with confidence.

It is of concern that 29% of respondents did not find it easy to contact their doctor. Perhaps a number of surgeries need to update their phone systems. One found it impossible and went to A&E. Another was intimidated by the news that the NHS is so busy and did not try to get an appointment. A third had sent a letter and got no response. Only one of our respondents had had a video interview and no one mentioned any push by their GP practice to use video. The majority, however, found their appointments, by whatever means, satisfactory. The NHS locally assures us that they are working through the backlog and we must not be afraid to call our GP when we have a concern.

Half of our respondents said they were lonely. Each issue of the newsletter has contacts for organisations such as Age UK Wandsworth, Furzedown Project, Katherine Low Settlement, Regenerate-RISE and others, all of which can provide help and companionship. If people have mobility problems, they can join Wandsworth Community Transport offering shopping and other trips. Many responders mentioned WCT and looked forward to its return. Dial-a-Ride and getting a Taxicard are also useful in widening choice.

The Forum would like to thank all those who responded. It is good to get a picture of how older people in Wandsworth have coped with the enforced isolation. Vaccination has now allowed the slow opening up of community centres and classes and we hope everyone is feeling more positive. The Forum is now holding members' meetings in the Anchor Church Centre again, with speakers and the chance to chat over a cup of tea. With most older people in Wandsworth double-vaccinated, we have the chance to get back to some normality. Transport can be arranged if you let the Forum know.

## Autumn Sudoku *Solution on back page*

	3	8		6				
	2				8			9
7	1		3	9	4	6		
	6		8					
5								7
					2		1	
		9	4	2	1		5	3
2			6				4	
				3		7	6	

By popular demand (as revealed in the answers to our Questionnaire), the Sudoku puzzle returns. Each of the nine blocks must contain the numbers 1-9, with each number appearing only once in a row or column or block

## Useful telephone numbers



**Action Fraud** 0300 123 2040

**Age UK Wandsworth**  
020 8877 8940 (switchboard)

**Age UK Handyperson** service for older people 020 8877 8949. Please note: this is not an emergency service

**Alzheimer's Society**  
020 8687 0922

**Citizens Advice Wandsworth**  
0300 330 1169

**National Domestic Violence Helpline** 0808 200 0247

**Gas Emergency** 0800 111 999

**National Dementia Support Line**  
0333 150 3456

**Over-50s Alcohol Helpline**  
0808 801 0750

**Relatives & Residents Association Helpline**  
020 7359 8136 (care homes)

**Silverline** 0800 470 8090

**St George's Hospital**  
020 8672 1255

**Victim Support Wandsworth**  
020 7801 1777

**Wandsworth Carers' Centre**  
020 8877 1200/020 8675 0811

**Wandsworth Community Transport** 020 8675 7460

**Wandsworth Hub is still here**  
If you need to know more about council services or the latest government advice, call **020 8871 6555** Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm

**Wandsworth Council**

- ◆ Switchboard **020 8871 6000**
- ◆ 24-hour emergency helpline **020 8871 7490**
- ◆ Council tax **020 8871 8081**
- ◆ Environmental services/noise **020 8871 6127**
- ◆ Adult soc care **020 8871 7707**
- ◆ Housing **020 8871 6161**





**Registered charity**  
**No 1096322**

### Correspondence

Lilias Gillies, Hon Secretary  
Tel: 020 8672 5592  
[lilias.gillies@btinternet.com](mailto:lilias.gillies@btinternet.com)

### Newsletter editor

Vicky Hutchings  
[hutchings.vicky@gmail.com](mailto:hutchings.vicky@gmail.com)

### Membership secretary

Su Elliott  
[su.elliott2@virgin.net](mailto:su.elliott2@virgin.net)

**We're on the Web**  
<https://www.wopf.org.uk/>

supported by  
Wandsworth  
Council



Affiliated to  
the National  
Pensioners  
Convention



### WOPF Management Committee

**Tony Tuck** Chair  
**Wendy Speck** Vice-Chair  
**John Horrocks** Vice-Chair  
**Lilias Gillies** Hon Secretary  
**Pius Gnanapragasam** Treasurer  
**Su Elliott** Membership Secretary

Valerie Hambelton, Syeda Islam,  
Nathalie Gibson-Wilson, Patma  
Patmaseni, Jasmin Elvie, Ricky  
Lucock, Vito Ward, Joyce Evans,  
Vernon Brookes, Fred Roberts,  
Margaret Brookes, Sarah Goodall,  
Sylvie Ramlogan, Agatha Anyiwo,  
Vicky Hutchings, Charles Runcie,  
Mo Smith, Jackie Clack, Lys Innes

**WOPF Privacy Statement** We  
only use your data to send you  
the newsletter or information  
about activities. We do not share  
your data with third parties. We  
hold your data securely.

## Meetings of the Forum

The next  
members'  
meeting  
will be on  
**12 October**



at the **Anchor Church Hall** on **Garratt Lane**  
at **2pm**, linking up with the borough's  
annual "Brighter Living Fair" – 10  
days of events to coincide with the  
International Day of Older Persons.

The speakers will be Wandsworth  
Council's Director of Public Health,  
**Shannon Katiyo**, talking about the  
latest **Public Health Report** for  
Wandsworth, and **Becky Howarth**, who  
will lead a discussion on the council's  
**Walking & Cycling Strategy**.

This will be the first public meeting for  
well over a year and it will be good to  
see you all again in person. As always,  
there will be **refreshments** afterwards.

## Forthcoming speakers/events

### November

**Marsha de Cordova**, MP for Battersea;  
A green energy adviser from **CREW Energy**

### December

Live music

## The Answers to our Autumn Sudoku on Page 7

9	3	8	2	6	5	1	7	4
4	2	6	7	1	8	5	3	9
7	1	5	3	9	4	6	2	8
1	6	4	8	7	3	2	9	5
5	9	2	1	4	6	3	8	7
3	8	7	9	5	2	4	1	6
6	7	9	4	2	1	8	5	3
2	5	3	6	8	7	9	4	1
8	4	1	5	3	9	7	6	2

## Membership Application/Renewal Form

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 organisations) to: **Membership  
Secretary, Wandsworth Older People's Forum, FREEPOST, c/o WCEN,  
DRCA Business Centre, Charlotte Despard Avenue, London SW11 5HD.**

**I wish to join/rejoin the Wandsworth Older People's Forum:**

Name (individual or organisation) .....

.....

Address .....

..... Postcode.....

Phone (Home).....

(Mob).....

Email.....

(This is important because, in future, because of funding, we may need  
to communicate with you by email, not post.)

♦ I enclose a £5 cheque/PO payable to Wandsworth Older People's Forum ☐

♦ I have made a payment of £5 into the Wandsworth Older People's Forum  
account at **Lloyds Bank, Sort Code: 30-99-08, Account no: 22084368** ☐  
Please put your name as the reference or we won't know who sent it!

**I might be interested in being a volunteer** ☐

**I am a UK tax payer and would like my subs to be gift-aided** ☐

Signed ..... Date ...../...../.....