



WANDSWORTH OLDER PEOPLE'S FORUM NEWSLETTER



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the National
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Convention



WOPF INFORMATION

Registered charity: No 1096322

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REPAIR CAFES GIVE HOUSEHOLD ITEMS A SECOND LIFE

By Charles Runcie

Community repair cafes across London are helping residents save money, reduce waste and reconnect with practical skills while building stronger local ties.

'Repair Week' returned to London in March, with an array of fixing and mending events helping people learn new skills and build confidence in repairing everyday items. One of the most effective ways of bringing household goods back to life is by taking them to a Repair Cafe. This community-driven initiative helps residents reduce waste, save money and extend the life of everyday items such as electronics, clothing and bikes.

These events form part of The Restart Project, which helps people learn how to repair broken electronics and rethink how they consume them in the first place. Running regular sessions at venues, volunteer experts offer free repairs and advice for items that might otherwise end up in landfill. One such cafe was established in Southfields at the end of 2022 by local resident Serena Potter. Early sessions were encouraging, with Serena quickly learning which types of items were most commonly brought in and where additional skills were needed. Since then, those gaps have been addressed, broadening the range of repairs available subject to volunteer availability. A typical new addition has been jewellery repairs.

A total of 15 Mend, Fix & Repair Cafes have now been held at St Barnabas Church in Southfields. They are going from strength to strength in terms of both items repaired and community impact, and Serena is thrilled by its success:

"Our impact locally is significant, not only in the number of items we have kept out of landfill and in encouraging sustainability, but in the number of local people bringing broken items, or volunteering on the door and in the kitchen."

Statistics on repairs are recorded and analysed. "We upload data from each cafe to the Restart Project's 'Fixometer'," Serena explains. "From the 823 items brought in we've prevented 1,583 kg of waste and 8,951 kg of CO₂ emissions. That's equivalent to driving 74,588 km, or growing 149 tree seedlings for 10 years." It's not just the repairs that makes the cafe so popular: "Our homemade cakes and friendly, collaborative atmosphere make it a great Saturday afternoon out, where people make friends and meet neighbours."

The cafes are clearly a hit with attendees:

- "Just wanted to share how brilliant the repair café was today. My toaster can finally toast four slices again after 5+ years of only managing two, and my paper cutter is back in action."
- "It was my first visit, and I was blown away by the community spirit. My Henry vacuum is still a goner, but I'm so glad I came along."
- "Thanks to Jo, who showed me how to patch jeans properly. We're lucky to have such a wealth of local expertise—lots kept out of landfill."
- "It's not just about repairs—it's a wonderful community event where you can enjoy homemade cakes and catch up with neighbours."

Paul White, Wandsworth Council's Cabinet Member for the Environment, says "Reducing the number of items we throw away is brilliant for our pockets and for tackling climate change. By repairing and reusing things from household items to clothes we can save money and live more sustainably. Many items thrown away simply need a minor repair to be as good as new. It's a great opportunity to pick up new skills, connect with your community, and give items a second life." Similar repair cafes are also held in Tooting and Putney.

Upcoming Southfields cafes:

Saturday 25 April and Saturday 13 June, both 12–3pm at St Barnabas Church. 146 Lavenham Rd, London SW18 5EP

For more information please email:
restartsouthfields@gmail.com

Forthcoming Meetings

14 April – AGM and Keeping Active in Nature

12 May – Alzheimer's and Dementia

9 June – Members' Get Together

GARDENING IN SPRING

By Dawn Killeen

Spring is beginning to brighten the borough, with daffodils, snowdrops and crocuses appearing in gardens and parks. Blossom drifts through the air, while magnolias and camellias bloom. The season brings colour, longer days and a welcome lift after winter, encouraging people to enjoy nature and improve their wellbeing.



From the chair



Dear Members and Friends

As we move into spring, it is an important time to reflect on the challenges and opportunities facing older people both locally and nationally. Recently, there has been a growing spotlight on the financial pressures many older residents face, with rising energy costs and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis continuing to impact daily life. These issues reinforce the importance of community support and ensuring that older people's voices are heard, which is at the heart of everything we do at the Wandsworth Older People's Forum.

We also continue to hear concerns about access to healthcare services and the challenges of an increasingly digital world, which can leave some older people feeling excluded. I am pleased to remind you that **our AGM will be held on 14 April, Anchor Church, 273 Garratt Ln, London SW18 4DU from 2:00pm-4:00pm**, and I very much look forward to seeing you there.

We do currently have a vacancy for a treasurer, so if you know anyone who could help, please get in touch.

We are also preparing a **members' survey and I urge everyone to complete it. Your feedback is invaluable**, and we encourage you to add comments so we can continue to respond to the needs of our community.

Looking ahead, **our Summer Members' Get-Together will be on 9 June**. This is always a wonderful occasion to connect, share experiences, and enjoy each other's company. We are also excited about the **Battersea Community Festival in September**, where we will have our usual stand. In addition, we would love members of our generation to take part on stage. If you would like to perform music or other entertainment, please let me know. It's a fantastic opportunity to showcase the talent within our community.

Finally, we are working on **improving our website and finding a new logo**. If you have creative ideas or would like to have a go at designing something, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Thank you for your continued support. Together, by sharing your voice and supporting one another, we can help shape services, strengthen our community, and ensure that older people in Wandsworth are not only heard, but truly valued.

SYEDA ISLAM MBE



Power to Connect Helps Bridge Wandsworth's Digital Divide

Power to Connect is a local charity supporting Wandsworth residents who feel digitally excluded or lack confidence using everyday technology. As more essential services move online, including GP appointments, benefits, banking and staying in touch with family, being offline can make daily life harder.

Power to Connect offers free, welcoming digital drop-in sessions in libraries across the borough, providing one-to-one help with emails, passwords, online forms, apps and staying safe online.

The charity also runs free digital skills courses and refurbishes donated laptops and tablets for residents, schools and community groups.

To find out more, visit www.powertoconnect.co.uk or email hello@powertoconnect.co.uk.



SOCIAL PRESCRIBING

Social Prescribing supports people by listening to their needs and connecting them with community services that help them feel better.

At Enable, our Social Prescribers receive referrals from GP surgeries and Adult Social Care, offering appointments by phone, in GP practices, or at home for Adult Social Care referrals. They take time to understand what matters to each person and explore the challenges affecting daily life.

Support may include linking individuals with local groups, activities, and services that help them stay active, independent, confident, and less isolated, while improving wellbeing through better access to information, advice, and meaningful social connections.



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Patient Experience and Concerns Around DNAR Discussions

A member of the community shared their experience of being admitted to hospital on several occasions over the past few years.

After being admitted following a fall, they had a conversation with a consultant about their care, including the option of a **Do Not Attempt Resuscitation (DNAR) decision**. They appreciated the conversation but made it clear they wanted time to think and speak with family before deciding. The next day, however, things felt very different.

Several healthcare professionals approached them at different times, each referring to a DNAR decision as though it had already been agreed. The individual found this confusing and unsettling, as they had not made any decision. They described feeling under pressure during what should have been a personal and carefully considered choice. When they returned home, they spoke to their GP, who shared that other patients had raised similar concerns. Unfortunately, this wasn't a one-off experience. During a later admission at another hospital, the same situation happened again — with repeated conversations about DNAR that felt persistent, despite the individual clearly stating they were not ready to make that decision. In a further admission to St George's Hospital, one interaction stood out as particularly upsetting. The individual felt judged based on their circumstances and left the conversation feeling as though their life and contributions had been reduced to a set of assumptions.

They later reflected on everything they had done — years of working, supporting families, volunteering, and continuing to contribute to their community — and felt strongly that those things had not been recognised in that moment.

In conversation with Valerie Hambelton



Personalised compassionate home care



Our Care Professionals are carefully chosen and matched to your individual needs, providing continuity, compassion and someone who really cares.

Our Services include:

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Get in touch today

Call **020 8871 0006**

Email **enquiries@hiscwandsworth.co.uk**

Visit our website **homeinstead.co.uk/wandsworth-lambeth**



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HOMESHARING - MAKING BETTER FOR SOUTHFIELDS GRID'S AHMAD

An elderly resident in Southfields Grid is thriving in a community-based living arrangement that has also led to a meaningful intergenerational friendship.

Ahmad Latif (88) has been "homesharing" for more than a year with Pratibha Dudani (33). The arrangement has enabled him to remain living independently in his own home while benefiting from regular support and companionship.

The pair were matched by Share and Care Homeshare, a London-based organisation and the largest provider of Homeshare services in the UK. The scheme brings together older people who would benefit from some practical help with individuals seeking affordable accommodation. In exchange for low-cost housing, the sharer provides up to 15 hours of support each week, including companionship and help with everyday tasks.

Ahmad's daughter, Tanya Latif, explained that the arrangement offered a valuable alternative following the death of her mother. She said that moving into residential care or hiring a live-in carer did not feel like the right solution, and Homeshare provided a suitable middle ground.

Over the past year, Ahmad and Pratibha have developed a close bond and formed what the family describes as a lifelong friendship. Pratibha has become a valued member of the household, supporting Ahmad with cooking, cleaning, and day-to-day activities, while also providing companionship.

Pratibha, who works full-time in the financial technology sector, said the experience has had a positive impact on her life, giving her a strong sense of belonging while living in London.

The matching process carried out by Share and Care Homeshare includes thorough vetting and interviews to ensure compatibility. Ahmad and Pratibha share similar interests and regularly spend time together watching football, going for walks, and sharing meals. Ahmad's family report that he is much happier since entering the arrangement. They say the presence of a homesharer has provided reassurance, security, and peace of mind, while also creating a more relaxed environment for everyone involved.

The scheme is also financially beneficial. Both Ahmad and Pratibha pay a monthly fee of £150 to Share and Care Homeshare, which is significantly lower than the cost of residential care or private rental accommodation. Caroline Cooke, founder of Share and Care Homeshare, said that such arrangements are becoming increasingly popular in London as a cost-effective, community-based solution. She highlighted the importance of companionship, practical support, and the reassurance provided by having someone present in the home.

For further information, visit www.shareandcare.co.uk or contact Share and Care Homeshare on 020 3865 3398.

Lavender Bridge Club meets at York Gardens Library Hall for tea/coffee, cakes and bridge every Wed and Fri. Call Andrew on 07940 354203 or email: andrewstimson@yahoo.com

Tooting Graveney Day Centre Activities, exercise classes and lunch for older people, from 11-3pm, Mon & Thurs at 14-16 Lynwood Rd, SW17 8SA. Tel 020 3602 8251 for prices.

Sunflower Dementia Cafe Mount Court, 16 Weimar St, SW15 1SJ. First Saturday of the month, 2.30-3.30pm. Carers with/without the person they support can meet to find support and make friends over tea.

60+ Cafe A warm and friendly cafe for the over-60s held in Roehampton Methodist Church, Minstead Gdns, SW15 4EB. Activities & food. Thurs, 11-4. Tel 020 8487 8285 or email: admin@roehamptonmethodist.org.uk

Involved and Interested

Heart & Lungs Singing Group is a free, welcoming community choir based in All Saint's Church, Brudenell Road, SW17 8DQ and open to anyone living with a lung or heart condition. Through music, breathwork and connection, we sing together, support each other, and have a lot of fun along the way! Fortnightly Thursday, 2-3.15pm, email kimhandlsg@gmail.com

Hestia Activity Centre for older adults from 10-4 every weekday exc Thursday. A range of social activities at 966 Garratt Lane, SW17 0ND inc tai chi, chair dance, choir, art, bingo and IT at low cost. For info and to book, call 020 8767 8426. Hestia also now runs an Age Well programme of activities for the over-55s in Roehampton, inc seated yoga, art and craft, quiz, lunch club and more. All welcome.

For info email **Rita Wing Hung** on kawing.hung@hestia.org

Iris Dementia Cafe St Luke's Church, 194 Ramsden Road, SW12 8RQ. Third Saturday of the month, from 2-4.30pm. For carers and the person they care for to socialise with others affected by dementia and take part in activities over refreshments.

Katherine Low Settlement offers a meeting place, support, exercise and lots of activities as part of its Age Well and Core programme (including Table Tennis Club, Lunch Clubs, Craft Sessions and more) for people 60+ in Battersea. Tel 020 7223 2845 for more info about what's on offer or email: elders@klsettlement.org.uk

Walk Wandsworth. For free walks around the borough's green spaces, go to enablelc.org/walkwandsworth and click on Register online for a walk <https://forms.office.com/e/mzn05WLe8R>

Monday Club 2-3.30 on Mondays at St Barnabas Church, 146 Lavenham Road, SW18 5EP. Opportunity for over-50s to share refreshments and entertainment. Nominal charge. Call Margaret on 020 8870 5364.

Involved and Interested

Open House for Seniors. A weekly social group for older people. Refreshments, activities, trips. Every Monday, 10.30-12pm in Ackroydon Hall, Montfort Place, SW19 6QL.

For more info, call **020 8877 8940** or email **info@ackroydonhall.com**

Wandsworth U3A (University of the Third Age) was founded in 2002 and currently has over 400 members. We are a welcoming group and hold a monthly meeting, normally with a guest speaker, on the third Monday of the month in Burridge Gardens Community Centre, SW11 1AY. Meetings are 2.15-4pm, cost £1.00. We currently have over 50 interest groups. To find out more, go to wandsworth.u3asite.uk/?s=groups

Singing for the Brain Run by the Alzheimer's Society in Wandsworth Libraries. Battersea Park Library: Tuesdays, 3-4pm (tel: 020 7720 4122); Putney Library: Wednesdays, 3-4pm (**tel: 020 8780 3085**).

WOFA (Wandsworth Over-50s Activities) For £10 a year you get 4 programmes of up to 30 outings each, prices vary. Events range from free walks, museum and art gallery visits, meals out, minibus trips, concerts, socials and even holidays. We are not on the internet, but a call to 07958 440808 will ensure you are posted a membership pack. Or write to: WOFA, Training and Resource Centre, Alma Road, SW18 1AQ.

Wandsworth Asian Women's Association offers a lunch club Tuesday and Wednesday for older women who want to meet up socially or seek advice. Talks given. Exercise & English classes. Call 020 8875 9465 for further info on classes.

Roehampton Community Shed is run by Age UK. Weekly group where men (or women) over 60 can meet and work on practical projects such as furniture upcycling while enjoying tea and a chat. Every Weds 11-3pm. Portwood Place, SW15 4ED. **020 8877 8940.**

Regenerate-RISE open-access day centre in Putney provides lunches, activities including exercise classes, health and wellbeing topics, bingo and entertainment, plus an outreach programme. Tel 020 8780 9330 for more information.

Places Leisure runs activities for older adults across the borough that include line-dancing, falls prevention classes, Forever Active wellness classes and more. Search for "Older Adults Activities in Wandsworth" at www.placeleisure.org where you can find the activities held at every centre.

Sparkle Earlsfield: Weds 10.30-14.00, St John the Divine Church, Garratt Lane, SW18 4EH. Sparkle East Putney: Tues & Thurs 10.30-14.00, St Stephen's Church Hall, Manfred Road, SW15 2RS. Sparkle Battersea: Weds 10.30- 14.00 St Michael's Wandsworth Common, Cobham Cl, SW11 6SP. Sparkle Roehampton: Tues 10.30- 14.00, Holy Trinity Roehampton, 7 Ponsonby Road, SW15 4LA.

Sparkle To register, **contact hello@sparkletogether.org or call 020 8877 3003** or visit sparkletogether.org to find out more about our intergenerational community centres

WANDSWORTH PATIENT GROUP

Residents in Wandsworth are being encouraged to take a more active role in shaping local healthcare services by joining the Wandsworth Patient Forum. The Forum is an informal, volunteer-run network made up of patients from GP surgeries across the borough. Meeting every two months, the group aims to ensure that patient voices are heard and represented in discussions about primary care. Organisers hope to include representatives from all 38 GP surgeries in the area. Members describe themselves as "critical friends," working alongside NHS practitioners to provide constructive feedback and help improve services for the wider community.

By building strong partnerships between patients and healthcare providers, the Forum plays a key role in influencing how local services are delivered and developed.

Anyone interested in getting involved or finding out more is invited to make contact.

Email: Sarahrackham@yahoo.com

Phone: 07757 638862



HEALTHWATCH WANDSWORTH

Healthwatch Wandsworth are the independent champion for people in Wandsworth who use health and social care services. We're here to make sure that those running services put people at the heart of care.

We aim to:

- Promote and support involvement of the public in health and social care.
- Find out what local people think, what matters to them, and make sure that their views shape health and care services in Wandsworth.
- Promote access to services and choice

We also offer an information and signposting service to help you identify the services and support you need

We can signpost or refer you to local health, social care or advocacy services, and provide information about what you can do when things go wrong.

You can contact us via:

Telephone – 0743 463 3745, 10am – 5pm Monday to Friday

Email – information@healthwatchwandsworth.co.uk

Visit our website at www.healthwatchwandsworth.co.uk

Thank you

The Forum would like to thank all our volunteers for their hard work, whether they have helped with refreshments, put out the chairs at meetings, proofread the newsletter or helped with the sound system. Thanks to everyone including but not limited to: **Jeff Barber, Trish Loy, Mahid Condal, and Zoe Chan** If there are any others who would like to volunteer, please contact Syeda at syebat@hotmail.com



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 £10 (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)..... (Mobile).....

Email.....

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

☐ I enclose a £10 cheque/PO payable to Wandsworth Older People’s Forum

☐ I have made a payment of £10 into the Wandsworth Older People’s Forum

Account information: 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



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.