

# AgeMatters



At home  
with our At  
Home service

Dates for  
your diary



Coping with  
memory loss

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# Foreword from the Chief Executive



which we think really bring the work of Age UK K&C to life. On page 9 Dermot McMahon talks to us about the highlights of his time volunteering with us as part of his Psychology degree, and on pages 20-21 three of our members tell our Dementia Team what it's like to live with memory loss. On page 14 Sue Baker, our interim Head of Independent Services, shines a light on the work of our At Home team, including an interview with Amanda, one of our dedicated carers who spends her days travelling across the borough to provide vital support for older people in their own homes.

**Welcome** to the third edition of Age UK Kensington & Chelsea's magazine, Age Matters. At the time of writing the days are still fairly windy and wet, but hopefully by the time it drops through your letterbox we will be well on our way to spring. It's amazing how a little bit of sunshine and a few daffodils can lift everyone's spirits.

Since our winter issue there have been lots of very exciting things going on, including our Festive Feast & Dance in December, and not one but two Valentine's events in February. You can find more details of these fantastic events on pages 4 and 12.

In this issue you will also find lots of interviews,

I hope you enjoy reading the magazine, and as always we welcome your feedback and suggestions – just get in touch with our Editor, Brooke.

*Jan*

Jan Halliday,  
Chief Executive,  
Age UK Kensington & Chelsea

## Meet the Team...

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# Festive Feast & Dance



LOTTERY FUNDED

In the last issue of Age Matters we were delighted to report that we had been awarded money from the Big Lottery's Celebrate Fund to organise a community event. On Friday 9th December we held a 'Festive Feast & Dance' at the Copthorne Tara hotel, where we provided a three course meal and entertainment for around 250 people from across our community. During the meal we were treated to a wonderful performance by Opera Holland Park and afterwards local performers Isaac and Claire played a variety of songs to get everyone up and dancing.

Attendees included Age UK K&C members and volunteers, and representatives from a wide range of other voluntary, community and statutory organisations in the borough. We were also delighted to be joined on the day by the Mayor of Kensington & Chelsea, Councillor Elizabeth Rutherford, Councillor Robert Freeman

and our MP for Kensington, Victoria Borwick. The event was a huge success, and would not have been possible without the support of the following people and organisations:

- ★ The Big Lottery Fund who kindly funded the event
- ★ The staff at the Copthorne Tara Hotel, who were so accommodating and supportive – especially Viki and Patrick
- ★ The Mayor of Kensington & Chelsea, Councillor Rutherford, for opening the event and taking the time to talk to everyone
- ★ Opera Holland Park, and Isaac and Claire, for their amazing performances
- ★ Our fantastic art group volunteers who made all the decorations
- ★ Harrods and the BKJ Jewish Community in Notting Hill, who between them donated more than 200 gifts
- ★ The Kensington & Chelsea Foundation for their continued support



- ★ The wonderful volunteers who joined us from Harrods and the national Age UK
- ★ The photographer from Peter Jones

We hope you all enjoyed it as much as we did, and we can't wait to do it all over again!

**Ximena Chiesa**  
Friends & Neighbours Coordinator

# Big Knit 2017

As we reported in December, innocent's Big Knit campaign is back, and it's bigger than ever! Once again they are teaming up with local Age UKs across the country to put little woolly hats on their smoothie bottles, and this year the target is 2 million! This year Age UK K&C's target is 400 hats, and for each one sold we will receive 25 pence.



The campaign helps to raise vital funds to support local and national winter projects to help older people keep warm and well through befriending visits, emergency cold weather support, warm meals and other vital services.

We'd like to say a huge thank you to all our fabulous knitters who helped us reach our first target of 200 hats in December. Now we need your help to reach our second target — another **200 hats by Friday 14th July 2017**

**Don't forget** to share your patterns, pictures and selfies



with others online using the hashtag #bigknit and #bigknitkc on our Facebook ([www.facebook.com/AgeUKKandC](http://www.facebook.com/AgeUKKandC)) and Twitter (@AgeUKKandC) pages, and remember to tell your knitting friends too! Thank you for all your help – we are very grateful.

**Knitters can contact Ximena Chiesa or Molly Blacknell on 020 8969 9105 for further information.**



# Meet the Trustees

*Few people realise that our dedicated Trustees are actually volunteers who give up their time for free to play a vital role in making important decisions about the Charity. This feature gives you the opportunity to 'Meet the Trustees', and in this issue we are talking to long-standing Trustee Barbara Ilias.*



*Barbara, how long have you been a Trustee and how did you become involved with Age UK Kensington & Chelsea?*

My path to becoming a Trustee of Age UK K&C began in 1989 when my mother was in a care home abroad after a severe stroke left her mentally incapacitated. For various reasons I couldn't bring her here, and my visits to her meant leaving my family on their own for two weeks at a time. I mentioned to someone here that I felt guilty that other people — including volunteers — were looking after her instead of me, her only child. The reply was obvious: why didn't I volunteer in a similar place here in London?

The answer was just down the road from where I lived: St. Mary Abbot's Hospital, which had a residential ward. I began visiting patients there and followed them to their new care homes when the hospital was demolished. I continued to visit regularly, sometimes with my dog, helping to fundraise and organise Christmas parties for the residents, and accompanying them on outings. In 1995 I was asked by a friend who was a Trustee of Age Concern Kensington & Chelsea to take her place as she was moving away, and here I've been ever since!

*What do you enjoy most about the role?*

It's a pleasure to be involved with such a well-managed charity which does what it sets out to do: make life better for older people. I've watched it grow in all directions: in ability to attract funding and partnerships with other charities, schools and local organisations; in providing new and better services; in attracting excellent and devoted volunteers; in organising the annual Health Fair; in speaking up for older citizens and trying to reduce loneliness by organising regular events and visits.

The Lottery-funded Christmas party for 250 residents was an example of this. I met the priest from St. Cuthbert's Church and the Volunteer Coordinator at Imperial College. What did they have in common? Two months later we gave a Valentine's party in St. Cuthbert's Church (over 150 people attended) and many of the volunteers serving tea were in bright blue Imperial College t-shirts. In addition, the entertainment was provided by Opera Holland Park, another of our strongest supporters.

My specific interest within the organisation is to enlarge and strengthen our Friends Group, who make regular donations to the charity and pledge to tell their friends and neighbours about our

work. We see immediately how greatly bequests and support from the Friends can help, as all money given to Age UK Kensington & Chelsea benefits residents in our borough.

*What do you do when you are not busy being an Age UK K&C trustee?*

My background was in teaching English as a foreign language and later on I was office manager for another Kensington charity. I'm retired now, live in West Kensington and serve on my estate's residents' committee. I co-chair a book group, belong to a second one, serve on two other committees and attend an excellent Italian class in Hammersmith.

*What do you enjoy doing in your free time?*

For 34 years one of my main enjoyments was walking my dog. We had a succession of three dachshunds who knew all the Kensington parks very well. My last one died two years ago and so far I have not replaced her. However, I still meet former Holland Park dog walking companions, with or without a canine friend. My other enjoyments include attending concerts, visiting museums and the countryside, especially Dorset.

# Get Involved!



**W**hilst we work in partnership with the national Age UK, not everyone knows that Age UK K&C is an independent charity responsible for its own finances. Although we are fortunate to receive some funding for many of our services, ever-increasing demand means that we rely on generous donations to bridge the gap. In addition to this, we are also indebted to our wonderful volunteers, without whom so much of our work wouldn't be possible.

Whether it's volunteering with us, making a donation or holding a bake sale, there are lots of ways you can support Age UK Kensington & Chelsea.

- 🌀 **Become a volunteer:** Use your skills to help with tasks such as gardening, shopping and de-cluttering, or befriend an isolated older person. If you would like to know more about volunteering, please visit [www.aukc.org.uk](http://www.aukc.org.uk), call Valerie on **020 8969 9105** (Mondays and Wednesdays) or email [volunteer@aukc.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@aukc.org.uk).

- 🌀 **Make a donation:** Any donation, no matter how large or small, will help us to provide support, advice and companionship to thousands of older people in our borough. You can send us a cheque in the post (address: 1 Thorpe Close, London, W10 5XL) or donate online via our JustGiving page: [www.justgiving.com/aukc](http://www.justgiving.com/aukc).

- 🌀 **Join our Friends' Group:** Our Friends' Group make regular donations to the charity and pledge to tell their friends and neighbours about the great work that we do. In return they are invited to special get-togethers, receive updates about our work and know that their support makes a huge difference to the lives of older people in their community. To become a Friend, simply fill in and return the form on the opposite page.

- 🌀 **Fundraise for us:** There are lots of ways you can fundraise for us, for example holding a coffee morning, organising a cake sale, or taking part in a sponsored event. Why not make us Charity of the Year in your workplace? Every penny raised goes directly to helping older people in Kensington & Chelsea. For more information, contact **Brooke** on **020 8969 9105** or email [bkerr@aukc.org.uk](mailto:bkerr@aukc.org.uk).

- 🌀 **Remember us in your will:** After you have looked after your loved ones and friends, please consider leaving a gift to us in your will. Your legacy lives on in our work. Should you have already been kind enough to remember us in your will, please ensure that our full name, **Age UK Kensington & Chelsea**, and our **registered charity number (1082658)** are clearly stated: otherwise your gift may not reach us but go automatically to the national Age UK.

# Join our Friends' Group

After filling in your details, please complete **Section 1** OR **Section 2**

and return to: Age UK Kensington & Chelsea, 1 Thorpe Close, London, W10 5XL  
(if you prefix the address FREEPOST RSKB-UZUY-JAZA, you don't need to stamp the envelope).

Title:  Name:  Surname:

Address:   
Postcode:

Tel:  Email:

## Section 1— Regular donation to Friends' Group via standing order

Yes, I would like to make a regular donation by standing order [please tick]

Your bank name:   
Your bank address:   
Postcode:

Name of account holder:

Account number:  Sort code:

I authorise my bank to make a gift of £

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And on the same date **annually/half-yearly/quarterly/monthly** (delete as appropriate) until further notice.

Signature  Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ (DD/MM/YYYY)

**[Bank use only]** Account to be credited: Age Concern Kensington & Chelsea  
Account number: 43333280 Sort Code: 20-96-55  
Address: Barclays Bank, 137 Ladbroke Grove, London, W11 1PR

## OR Section 2— One-off donation

I enclose my initial subscription to the Friends' Group by cheque  
Please make your cheque payable to Age UK Kensington & Chelsea

*giftaid it*

**Boost your donation by 25p for every £1 you donate! If you are a UK taxpayer, Age UK K&C can reclaim Gift Aid from tax you pay for the current tax year. In order to Gift Aid your donation, you must tick the boxes below:**

I want to Gift Aid my donation of £\_\_\_\_ and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to Age UK Kensington & Chelsea.

I am a UK tax payer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ (DD/MM/YYYY)

# Computer Corner

## Get yourself through those wearisome daily chores with an audiobook!

By Cristina Donaldson, Age UK K&C Volunteer

I prefer to do my 'keep fit' exercises at home rather than traipsing to the gym in the cold, but I find them generally irksome. The remedy I found for this tedium and other dull activities around the house is to listen to a good audiobook.

With an audiobook I can have the dolls' dressmaker in *Our Mutual Friend* sitting on the other side of the table as I peel the vegetables. The flashing teeth of Mr Carker in *Domby and Son* frighten me as I fold the laundry and drag the ironing board out of the cupboard under the stairs.

Mr Cornelius Fudge flashing out of the fireplace in his pinstriped cloak in *Harry Potter* turns ironing into a new experience. The drunken fat lady in the portrait who disdainfully demands the new password to let Ron into the common room lifts my spirits as I scrape the plates into the bin. David Attenborough's memoirs

in *Life on Air* take me back to the birth of BBC 2 as the second television channel. His contortions in those years of filming the birds of paradise with the limited equipment he had available make me laugh out loud as I defrost the freezer.

If you love reading but never seem to have the time, I highly recommend trying an audiobook. Nowadays they are so easy to use; you can simply download your chosen book and listen to it using a variety of devices such as your computer, tablet or smartphone. Personally, I like the idea of downloading audiobooks onto a USB stick and playing them using a portable player, which can be purchased from the RNIB.

The Sonic portable USB player costs around £40 and can be purchased either from their website ([www.shop.rnib.org.uk](http://www.shop.rnib.org.uk), product code DH444) or by calling them on 030 3123 9999.

### Here are just some of the audiobook subscription services available:

- ♪ The RNIB's Talking Books Service is completely free for anyone registered blind or partially sighted. You can borrow up to six books at a time, with no limit on the number of books you can borrow, and they will deliver the CD or USB stick straight to your door. For more information, just give them a call on 030 3123 9999.
- ♪ Calibre Audio Library is a subscription-free nationwide postal and internet service for people with sight problems, dyslexia or other disabilities that prevent them from reading print. For details of all their services, visit [www.calibre.org.uk](http://www.calibre.org.uk) or call them on 01296 432 339.
- ♪ There are many paid-for audiobook subscription services, but one of the biggest and best-known is Audible. They offer a free 30 day trial, and their membership plans start at £7.99 a month to download and keep a new book every month. For more information, visit [www.audible.co.uk](http://www.audible.co.uk).



Shutterstock user: ekler



# Spotlight on volunteering

*Psychology student Dermot McMahon spent six months volunteering with Age UK K&C as part of his course. Here Volunteer Coordinator Paul Higgins interviews him about his time with us.*

## **Dermot, what made you want to volunteer with Age UK Kensington & Chelsea?**

I study Psychology at the University of Limerick in Ireland and, as my course is centred on helping people struggling with a variety of different challenges, I decided that volunteering with an organisation like Age UK would enable me to interact closely with some of the more vulnerable members of society.

Family members of mine have been closely supported by Age UK across London, and due to the truly cosmopolitan and varied borough that is Kensington & Chelsea, I decided to work with Age UK K&C in an effort to meet and assist people from all walks of life, from very different backgrounds.

## **What types of volunteering tasks have you been doing with us?**

Through Age UK K&C I have worked with many people across a huge variety of tasks. From escorting our members to the shops or a doctor's appointment, to simply visiting people in their homes for a chat and a cup of tea, the activities I have been involved in have been extremely varied.

I have consistently helped on the weekly shopping trips around London, to help our members get out to pick up some groceries and have some lunch as a group.

I have helped at the monthly Memory Cafés which are always a great occasion, with frequent performances featuring Opera Holland Park. I found the Digital Clinics are a brilliant way to get our members comfortable using the newest technology, and the Friends & Neighbours project also holds a number of fantastic events and dances for our members. With the Garden Guardians I have assisted in tackling some truly overgrown gardens, and I have helped to brighten up people's homes with home help and decluttering tasks. I can honestly say that I have been involved in almost all of Age UK K&C's events and daily tasks – and I have thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it.

## **What will you take away from your time volunteering?**

The greatest benefit from my time here with Age UK K&C has to be interacting with people. When you meet new people almost every day of the week, you learn quickly how to form a bond and create trust with this person. You become good at making small talk and finding things in common with people. You learn how to help people feel comfortable being assisted by a stranger, and more often than not, end up being good friends!

In relation to my Psychology course, meeting all of our fantastic members has opened my eyes to the personal struggles people face below the



surface, and how even a friendly face and a chat can brighten up a person's week. The most useful thing I have learned is the importance of listening to people. Being able to have a private conversation about something that has been worrying you helps to take a lot of weight off people's chests and can make a huge impact on their state of mind.

## **Have there been any particular highlights?**

Without a doubt one of the best tasks I have been involved with whilst volunteering was a trip to the X Factor at Wembley over the summer. Having not watched the programme in a number of years, I wasn't quite sure what to expect. However, regardless of the actual performance, the biggest shock that day was to see our members singing and cheering like teenagers for their favourite acts. It was a fantastic day out and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves. That trip to the X Factor was certainly one of many highlights during my time here with Age UK K&C.



## Door to Door Solutions for people who cannot access mainstream public transport

Westway CT works to make a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of people living in The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster. Established in 1991 and running 25 years, Westway CT has grown into a thriving social enterprise with a fleet of over 40 vehicles. It provides group transport, a dial-a-ride service, takes passengers to hospital and GP appointments and provides training services, including driver training and vocational training for those who are unemployed.

Through its Door to Door Solutions, Westway CT offers a Community Car Scheme, Shopper Services and Mobility Scooters to residents living in the local area. This range of transport solutions aims to give passengers who can't easily access public transport the ability to get out and about self-sufficiently.



The **Community Car Scheme** is provided by a team of volunteer drivers who use their own vehicles to take passengers wherever they need to go, be it to attend activities or classes, visit friends and family or generally go about their everyday business. "Providing a Car Service for local people who can't access mainstream public transport doesn't just address a mobility issue," said Anna Porta, the organisation's Business Development Manager, "it does so much more than that."

It addresses a very wide range of issues that all have an impact on the health and wellbeing of our passengers."

The **Shopper Services** are run in two accessible minibuses on weekdays and have a set timetable to visit local supermarkets. Users can get their weekly shop without the hassle of trying to juggle bags while getting on and off public transport. "Positive feedback from our users about the Shopper Service has revealed that many of our users actually get to know people living close to them through using the service. It's not unusual for friendships to be formed on our buses and some of our clients have said it's the only time they have to be social" said Tracey Heap, Communications and Marketing Manager. **Mobility Scooters** offer another level of personal freedom. Mobility Scooters, driven on the pavement, are available from Westway CT's offices, or from the Park's Office in Holland Park. "It is so liberating to be able to get about again and be truly independent," said Buffy, a user of the Mobility Scooters. "I cannot thank those running the scheme enough."



A combination of using the **Community Car Scheme, Shopper Service and Mobility Scooters** undoubtedly has a huge impact local on people's health and happiness. "It's a well-known fact," said Anna, "that when you stop being connected to people, your wellbeing suffers. It's proven beyond doubt that being socially connected can help and that is what community transport does: it connects people."

Westway CT offers its Door to Door Solutions to local people who cannot access mainstream public transport easily. If you would like to know more about the services they have a team waiting to answer any questions, just call **020 8964 1114 weekdays between 1 pm – 4 pm** or you can go to the website **www.westwayct.org.uk**

To register to use any or all of the three Door to Door Solutions just give them a call or email **bookings@westway.org.uk** to request a Registration Form.



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Credit unions used to be regarded as a last resort for people borrowing small sums to get them through to the end of the month, but actually today's unions are really like community banks – a safe place for savings and loans for everyone. "We're like a bank, but pride ourselves on being friendly and accessible, where you will be dealing with someone who knows you by name and has the time to sit with you and talk things through", says Your Credit Union's William Rhodes.

The Kensington-based union has more than 1500 members in the Royal Borough and offers ISAs and savings accounts with a competitive annual return of 2% – topping the interest offered by banks and building societies. In recent years the union has seen an increase in the number of members aged 50-plus taking out loans or depositing money into savings accounts and ISAs. "The fact that the UK Government has demonstrated such strong support for credit unions has helped raise awareness and convinced people we offer a viable and reliable alternative to the traditional banking sector," adds Mr Rhodes.

In terms of loans, the union typically deals with sums in the region of £2,000 to £7,500 to fund anything from buying a new kitchen, or a walk-in shower, or to visiting family members overseas. The credit union is a co-operative organisation where all money is invested locally, keeping money circulating within the local economy. Your Credit Union includes among its members; MP for Chelsea & Fulham, Greg Hands; Kensington MP, Victoria Borwick, Westminster North MP Karen Buck and Hammersmith MP Andy Slaughter. Savings accounts are covered under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme protected up to a total of £85,000.



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# FRIENDS & NEIGHBOURS PROJECT

**O**ur Friends & Neighbours project actively combats loneliness by connecting isolated older people with their community and supporting them to join group activities. Through our huge range of events, courses and clubs we provide plenty of opportunities to meet like-minded people, take trips and learn new skills. With the help of our dedicated volunteers, over 280 members are involved in this project.

Last year the project provided social and learning opportunities to more people than ever before, thanks to

the introduction of new projects such as computer lessons, art classes, themed parties, lunches and bingo. We've had such a great winter season together and I'm happy to say the fun continues into the spring. We have a whole host of exciting things coming up over the next few months, including day trips to Oxford, the Isabella Plantation and Kensington Palace, a performance of That'll Be the Day, and lots of themed parties.

If you haven't yet had a chance to join us for one of our concert and afternoon tea events with Opera Holland Park at St Cuthbert's Church, you are missing out! Here are two dates for your diary:

- **Thursday 18th May** - 'All the Way to Broadway' concert and afternoon tea
- **Thursday 15th June** - Concert and afternoon tea as part of Creativity & Wellbeing Week

If you haven't yet joined the F&N project, have just signed up, or even if you've been coming for a while, we'd love to see you at one of our events. We're looking forward to getting to know you over a delicious meal or a cup of tea, where you can make some new friends and get to know some of us.

*If you would like more information, or to receive the programme of events, just give me a call on 020 8969 9105 or email [xchiesa@aukc.org.uk](mailto:xchiesa@aukc.org.uk). You can also follow us on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram.*

## Love is in the air!



The Friends & Neighbours Project got off to a great start this year with our two amazing Valentine's celebrations: our annual Valentine's Party on Saturday 11th February in partnership with Open Age and Venture Community Association, and our Concert & Afternoon Tea at St Cuthbert's Church on Thursday 16th

February in partnership with Opera Holland Park.

Thank you to everyone who came to these events and helped make them so special. I'd like to say an especially big thank you to every single one of our Age UK K&C volunteers, as well as those from Imperial College, DWP and Volunteer Centre K&C for all they did to make it so great.

We couldn't have done it without them! We love and appreciate them all.

At Age UK K&C we work so hard to combat loneliness and isolation in our community, and we think that showing love for one another is the best place to start. We do this through the projects and events that we run, but this year we are calling on all of you to help us reach out to as many people as possible. Small gestures like a smile or a hug, or popping in to check a neighbour is ok, might seem insignificant – but they can make a huge difference to someone's day. When we work together we can achieve so much more, and we can all help make sure Kensington & Chelsea is a great place to grow older.

After all, all you need is love...

Ximena



# 1 Million Minutes Campaign



**Y**ou may have seen in the news before Christmas that Dame Barbara Windsor teamed up with ITV to spread the word about their 1 Million Minutes campaign.

The campaign was designed to encourage people to volunteer with lonely older people over the festive period, with the idea that it only takes a minute to make someone's day.

As part of this, Barbara Windsor came to our coffee morning at Mary Smith Court to meet our members and find out how our Friends & Neighbours project has changed the lives of older people in Kensington & Chelsea.

**Find us on facebook**  
facebook.com/AgeUKKandC

**Follow us on Twitter**  
@AgeUKKandC

## Be the Change!

We are looking for a team of committed volunteers to be part of the Friends & Neighbours project on a regular basis during the week. Our volunteers build relationships and a sense of community by engaging with our members, in order to support them and help to reduce loneliness and isolation. They are people who give the

time, talent and energy to make a difference for others.

Volunteering is a fantastic way to learn new skills, make friends and work together to make a real impact in our local community. We love all the help we can get. To be part of this amazing team, please contact me on 020 8969 9105 or email me at [xchiesa@aukc.org.uk](mailto:xchiesa@aukc.org.uk) and I will get back to you.



# At home with At Home: *a window into our work*

**Sue Baker is the Interim Head of Independent Services at Age UK Kensington & Chelsea. As an ex-CQC inspector she has been very impressed with the services the At Home team and carers provide....**

Since I have been working at Age UK K&C I have been humbled by seeing the services provided by our largely 'unsung heroes' who travel around the local area (and sometimes beyond!) providing care and support for older people in their own homes. I am not the only one. Clearly, the government's care regulatory body, CQC, were too, awarding a rating of 'Good' at the last inspection.

As one of CQC's occasional inspectors, I know how difficult it can be to demonstrate that we are on top of the endless rules and regulations for providing domiciliary care! But the people we most want to impress are our clients and their families and friends who also provide much needed support for their loved ones. I have been pleasantly surprised by the number of people who take the trouble to send in cards and emails thanking the At Home team for the care provided. And with so many other Age UK K&C staff out and about in the local area, many direct compliments are made in passing. We always make sure we tell the carer concerned, as it's a lonely job and sometimes quite stressful. That's why it was good to catch up with Amanda (pictured) when she popped by to hand in her timesheets.

The first thing Amanda told me was how much she liked her work. "I love it", she says,

***" I am really committed to working with older people and I like helping someone when they need it. It's so nice turning up to care for a person and seeing the smile on their face when I arrive. Especially if someone has been a bit down and is by themselves. It's good to have a bit of a chat "***

Amanda is impressive in that she clearly values the clients for themselves and said that their appreciation of the support she provides makes her feel good about her own worth as a carer. This is not to say that there aren't difficulties, and we know that the constant struggle with zero hour contracts, travel and sometimes



Amanda  
Age UK K&C Carer

irregular hours are challenging for all concerned. For Amanda the stresses include juggling the travelling, getting the hours she needs and making sure school care arrangements are in place for her own daughter. So it was good to hear Amanda's comments about the team back at the office: "They are very good - friendly, open and they will talk things through. Joan and Ann understand the pressures we are under and there is give and take. It feels like a team effort". I know from being around the team in the office how challenging it can be with nearly 40 carers out morning to night, seven days a week, rain or shine. Amanda is not easily daunted. "It's not an easy job. It can be stressful, but I like a challenge"

she says, describing some critical moments where her intervention has been vital.

**“ You get to know how people are and you can spot small changes. One lady I visited was not at all herself when I arrived. So I phoned 111 and an ambulance was called. It turned out she had had a stroke. ”**

It's not at all unusual for carers to have to step up and take action when faced with concerns. Often they are the only person calling in on an elderly person, so their observations and diligence in reporting issues appropriately is vital.

Like other At Home carers, it was good to hear that Amanda is keen to progress and develop her skills. “I like this work. I want to learn more and go up a level”, she tells me.

It's important to remember that the overall quality and effectiveness of the service is down to our intrepid team in the Acklam Road office, led by Joan Martin. All the team tell me they have worked for other domiciliary care agencies, but that what makes At Home special is the fact it's all about the service user. Ann says

**“ The care we provide is the priority. I have worked in agencies where the main thing is just getting more and more business. Here we want to get it right for the person – this is the most important thing. We are a charity. We are not doing this for profit; good care is what it's about. ”**

Chris, who can be found wandering the streets of Kensington & Chelsea most days of the week checking up on our carers and popping in to visit particularly vulnerable clients, goes on to describe how important it is to work with what people want.

“Some people”, she tells me, “are frightened of having a carer in and may refuse care. They think this will take their independence away. One of our clients said ‘I want to look after my wife while I can; carers will take over’, but we are there to help keep people as independent as possible, for as long as possible. We were happy to fall in with what the gentleman felt would help him care for his wife, and I pop in often to back up him up.”

One of the things Chris is particularly hot on is telling our clients about other help available in the area, in particular the

other services provided by Age UK K&C. She says “I link up a lot with our Health & Wellbeing team, getting people exercise sessions at home for example, where I can see this would help.”

At other times we might pull in other support such as our befriending or escorted shopping services if someone is particularly isolated and alone with limited mobility. The team are always happy to help arrange support where we can. All this is above and beyond the funded care packages, but it's key to ensuring we respond holistically in supporting all our clients.

So what do the staff here most like about their work? For Ann and Chris it's the team work:

**“ We are a great team; a good match of different strengths and we support each other... the most satisfying thing is getting the job done well. ”**

Chris says “We have many very good carers and it's important to support them as best we can. It's not always easy and the situations we all have to deal with can be a challenge.”

For Ann the hardest thing is when a client passes away. She tells me “Even on the phone you have built up a relationship and rapport, and it's very sad when this comes to an end.”



Chris & Ann

**We are glad to report that the At Home service is looking to expand the range of services on offer to make the most of the interests and skills of our staff, as well as employ more carers to benefit older people in the borough. So watch this space! It has been great working with the At Home team – a real privilege to journey alongside for a while. Thanks for the chat guys. And thanks to all our carers who face many challenges day in, day out, but still deliver vital support so very well. In the next issue of Age Matters we will be interviewing Joan Martin, our stoical team leader who only has to raise an eyebrow for all to take note! Sue Baker**

# HEALTH & WELLBEING Services

Meet the Team...



**Kathe Jacob,**  
Health & Wellbeing Team Manager



**Paul Higgins,**  
Dementia Volunteer Coordinator



**Gary Rowe,**  
Memory Groups Coordinator



**Aisling Fegan,**  
Senior Dementia Advisor



**Kate Nash,**  
Health Promotions Coordinator



**Teresa Pope,**  
Home Exercise Coordinator

## What do we do?

We run a range of projects and services to promote health and wellbeing in later life. These include the annual Health Fair, our innovative work around memory and dementia, carer support, volunteer schemes promoting healthy lifestyles

and increasing confidence, and health events focused on conditions which affect older people.

For further information, contact the Health & Wellbeing team on 020 3181 0002 or email us at [dementia@aukc.org.uk](mailto:dementia@aukc.org.uk).



**Ashika Patel,**  
Dementia Support Worker



**Adi Zeira,**  
Dementia Support Worker



**Elizabeth Clarke,**  
Dementia Support Worker



**Vasiliki Katsouri,**  
Dementia Support Worker





# Healthwise Project

## Being active in older age means less brain shrinkage!

Activity really is the best medicine. Some of us love to go to the gym or an exercise class and others don't. It doesn't matter what we do, as long as we can stay active. Getting out once a day makes all the difference. Just a 10 minute "chunk" of physical activity is good for our health.

**Shock statistic!** In the UK, 40% of long term health conditions and 30% of falls are linked to inactivity. And it's not just our physical health that benefits from being active, but our brains too. Research has shown that older people who are more active have less brain shrinkage.

However, as we get older some of us just can't get out independently even if we want to. To help older people in this situation, Age UK K&C have a great programme going on, with the sterling help of our volunteers:

**Exercise at home** provides support for those of us who would like to remain active, but for one reason or another are finding it more difficult to do so.

The programme arranges for a volunteer to visit you at home once a week for an hour to either do **chair based exercises** or to go for a **walk outside**. The programme is for 10 weeks and in that time

we hope to improve your strength, mobility and confidence.

If you are able to get out, we are running **Health & Strength groups** in different areas of the borough. These groups meet for two hours weekly for 10 weeks. Each week we look at a different aspect of health and wellbeing, followed by a 50 minute session of chair-based and/or

exercise to prevent falls. Refreshments are provided.

There is a group currently running on Thursdays between 1 and 3pm at Response Community Projects 300, Old Brompton Road, SW5 9JF. To find out more about the programme, contact Kate Nash (Health Promotion Coordinator) or Teresa Pope (Home Exercise Coordinator) on 020 3181 0002 or by emailing [knash@aukc.org.uk](mailto:knash@aukc.org.uk) / [tpope@aukc.org.uk](mailto:tpope@aukc.org.uk).

## DIARY FOR HEALTH & WELLBEING ACTIVITIES SPRING 2017

Healthwise activities will give you more knowledge about your body and keeping healthy. It's a great place to ask questions and talk to experts in a sociable and relaxed environment. **For any Healthwise activity, please contact Kate or Teresa on 020 3181 0002.**

ACTIVITY	WHAT?	WHERE?	WHEN?
Carers' Get Together	Visit to Tate Britain with facilitator Mary Attwood	Meet at Main Entrance to Tate Britain	Tues 25th April, 10.30am
Carers' Get Together	Alexander Technique Workshop with Nicholas Brandon (STAT)	1 Thorpe Close W10 5XL	Mon 15th May, 1:30-3:30pm
Carers' Get Together	Art Workshop with Megan Charles	2 Thorpe Close W10 5XL	Thurs 8th June, 1:30-3:30pm
Macular Degeneration Support Group	A lively and stimulating group with speakers, information, discussion & raffle!	Earls Court Health Centre, 2b Hogarth Rd, SW5 0PT	Second Tues of the month 2-4pm: 11th April 9th May 13th June 11th July 8th August
Volunteer training for Chair-based Exercise	In this workshop volunteers will gain the skills to be able to deliver the exercise at home programme	1, Thorpe Close W10 5XL	Thurs 29th June 5:30-7:30pm Tues 18th July, 5:30-7:30pm

## Dementia Services

# Getting to grips with memory loss

We asked three Age UK K&C members to tell us how memory loss has affected their lives, and what they do to keep their spirits up. If you would like to join discussions relating to memory loss, or have any questions, please contact Aisling Fegan, Dementia Advisor, on 020 3181 0002 or email [afegan@aukc.org.uk](mailto:afegan@aukc.org.uk).

## Robert Augustus, Portobello Road antiques dealer

*“ All the best things are two-way – yin and yang, giving and taking - and helping someone takes you outside yourself. ”*

Robert looks at me with twinkly blue eyes over the top of his gold rimmed glasses to tell me, in his vigorous way, that “if you destroy someone’s memory you are destroying their life. Robert is keenly aware of the struggle that people with memory loss face because two years ago he was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s dementia. The diagnosis was a huge shock; at 81 Robert was, and still is, fully involved in all aspects of his antiques business. Last year he bequeathed his fantastic tile collection to the Ironbridge Gorge Museum. It is the pinnacle of a lifetime of collecting.

Robert began his connection with antiques over 50 years ago. Helped by a loan of £2,650 from his uncle in the 1960s, he bought a property on Portobello Road with an antiques shop at the bottom. From then on, Portobello Market was to shape his life’s routine: “Every Saturday I was out on the road,



buying antiques, becoming a member of the Glass Circle and that was my hobby. I loved it!”

Robert still gets a thrill hunting for something special amongst the bric-a-brac of the market. But increasingly he is battling with his body’s limitations. He says

*“ I get very tired and it’s a great strain. I find I can’t do too much and I’m not up to it. ”*

However, Robert’s almost military discipline prevents any self-pity; he does his exercises each morning and has a strong spiritual belief about “making the best of it.”

Through all his daily trials, Robert expresses real humanity. To him,

“one of the most important things is to laugh at yourself – not for yourself but because others appreciate it.”

In his view, the key to feeling better is to start helping someone else. Robert has befriended a disabled man in Portobello Road:

*“ I’ve known him for four years and when I see him I wrap my arms round him and give him a big hug. How rich life can be - what is it worth to give him a hug? Its beyond words and value! ”*

Interview by Kathe Jacob, Health & Wellbeing Manager

**Antipodean former actress Deidre came to London in the early 60s, appearing on the stage and TV, eventually following her love of the arts into curating at the Victoria & Albert Museum.**

***“ I believe more people could benefit from the arts, music, poetry and play reading – it allows people to get in touch with their feelings. ”***

**D**eirdre’s intellect and passion for life emerges forcefully from her petite frame, but her speech is clear and deliberate:

***“ I feel lucky living in Kensington & Chelsea as there is still so much going on. ”***

The arts have always been important to Deirdre, starting with a childhood wish to be a ballerina and later on working as an art historian in London. A recent visit to the British Museum revealed the delight she still has for ancient treasures:

***“ I always look forward to going to France. I used to visit a little medieval village which was rich in architecture. The people of that time were brilliant and could create so much with little resources. ”***

Deirdre also has her struggles, and she explains the impact memory loss has on a person: “It’s like losing two arms and two legs. I feel sadness because something that was automatic is no longer and I find myself searching around...I do not use the word dementia because I have grown up with negative associations of how the word is used. In the ballet Giselle, being demented is equated with total madness.” Deirdre’s younger sister and son are a great source of support, and she shares her daily woes



with Jean Jacques, a cat who has a special place in her life. However Deirdre is never one to stay sad for long and she describes a good day as “one with the sun shining and feeling its warmth, sitting at the table with the sun streaming through the large windows, getting a phone call from friends saying ‘let’s meet for lunch!’”

*Interview by Elizabeth Clarke, Dementia Support Worker*

**Former film producer Derek, 87, lives an active life in London and is a regular attendee at Age UK K&C events.**

***“ I make myself go out for a walk on a daily basis, even in bad weather. It’s essential to move, otherwise you sit on a chair all day – it’s too easy! ”***

**D**erek was born in the green fields of Leicestershire and enjoys talking about his school days and his life at Trinity College in Dublin. His film making career ran from the 1960s to the 1980s with films including *Alice’s Adventures in*

*Wonderland and Gulliver’s Travels*. However, these could not match the major commercial success of *Naked as Nature Intended*, a 1961 British nudist film starring Pamela Green! Derek says “I was not remotely interested in making films for money. If the film didn’t interest me, I didn’t want to have anything to do with it!”

Like his friends Robert and Deirdre, Derek has his share of dark times and struggles with a lack of energy. For a man who is used to having a full diary

he finds it “soul destroying” not to have a busy life.

But Derek also finds pleasure in the simple things, saying “To hear music is the single most important thing for me.”

So what makes a good day for Derek? “Being interested and being able to contribute... that makes a good day.”

*Interview by Vasia Katsouri, Dementia Support Worker*

# Thinking of volunteering, but not sure you have anything to offer? Think again!

By Health & Wellbeing Volunteer Coordinator, Paul Higgins

## Try befriending

Whatever your skills and experience, your contribution will be valued by us and the clients we work with. Here are a couple of examples of successful befriending matches we have made:

I recently introduced an Irish lady with a strong Catholic faith to a volunteer who is not only from the same congregation, but who also understands the trials of memory loss. I was so pleased to witness the joy on the lady's face when she was reminded in conversation of a priest she had once known.

I was also able to introduce a 92 year old Iranian man to a Farsi speaking volunteer. The gentleman was dealing with both memory loss and the loss of his friends, but thanks to his volunteer he now has his voice back and is finally able to express his thoughts and feelings to someone who understands.

We are always looking for volunteers who speak community languages, and there are many other people who would like help from a volunteer. One such example is a lady from Chile I recently visited, who moved to the UK as a young woman and is looking for a volunteer to cook with her. She wants to experience the simple delight of being helped to make a freshly cooked meal with ingredients that she chooses, rather than the pre-prepared meals she currently eats.

## Training & Support

We offer all our volunteers a comprehensive induction and dementia training, including an initial dementia awareness session followed by regular workshops to gain new knowledge and skills such as shared reading and chair based exercise.

Inspired by attending a recent dementia awareness session,

a long-standing befriending volunteer told us "I plan to do a life story book and take things along that may remind [him] of his past." Another volunteer working on our new 'dog befriending' project told us the new information and tips they picked up at our dementia awareness training has "transformed" their befriending sessions.

## Groups and transport companions

Our volunteers also play a crucial role working as part of a team at our weekly Movement for Life sessions and monthly Memory Cafés. They also support our clients as transport companions and provide assistance getting to and from these events.

If you would like to know more about volunteering with Age UK K&C, please contact me by emailing [phiggins@aukc.org.uk](mailto:phiggins@aukc.org.uk) or calling me on 020 3181 0002 or 07985 718744.

# Activities at New Horizons

New Horizons is a multi-activity centre for older people, based in Chelsea. The centre is delivered by a consortium of three charities: Open Age (lead partner), Age UK Kensington & Chelsea and The Guinness Trust. New Horizons promotes independence and active lifestyles, provides new interests and challenges, supports health and wellbeing and encourages fun and enjoyment.

Please note you must be a member of New Horizons to attend the following courses. If you would like to become a member, just give the centre a call on 020 7590 8970 or visit [www.new-horizons-chelsea.org.uk](http://www.new-horizons-chelsea.org.uk) to download an application form.



Class	Description	Cost	Dates	Day	Time	Length
<b>Beginners' Computers</b>	If you would like to learn the basics of using a PC, then this course is for you. It covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigating the desktop</li> <li>• Opening apps</li> <li>• Working with files</li> <li>• Adjusting settings</li> <li>• Searching for files and apps</li> <li>• Tips for managing multiple windows.</li> </ul>	£3 per class	Starts: Wed 19th April Ends: Wed 24th May	Wednesday	2-4pm	6 weeks
<b>Digital Life</b>	Learn the practical uses of digital media for day-to-day life. From online shopping, communication via email and social media, to booking tickets and flights.	£3 per class	Starts: Mon 24th April Ends: Mon 22nd May	Monday	1-3pm	4 weeks

(please note there is no class on Mon 1st May as it is a bank holiday)

# We're Open Age



We know life doesn't have to stop when you get older. That's why we work with you and others over 50 to create chances to work, learn, take part, and stay healthy in body and mind. We provide around 400 activities every week, including creative and performing arts, employment support, physical activities, IT courses, socials, trips, lunches, and much more.

**Join us by becoming an Open Age member - it's completely free.**  
Call us on 020 8962 4141 or go to [www.openage.org.uk](http://www.openage.org.uk)



## Get back into a healthy, active life



Would you like to take part in leisure activities whilst making new friends, but are not sure how to?

Would you like to go to a choice of low cost/free activities near where you live, but don't feel ready?

Open Age's LINK UP service is especially for you, if you are finding it difficult to get to one of our activities. Whatever's holding you back, we're here to give you support on getting started with our exercise groups, arts, language and computer courses, social groups, lunches, trips and much more.

**Whatever the difficulty, big or small, call Catrin or Donna on 020 8962 5584 or email [cevans@openage.org.uk](mailto:cevans@openage.org.uk).**

## Healthy Lungs Exercise Class

Open Age offers structured exercise classes for people who have a diagnosed lung condition and difficulties breathing. They are suitable for beginners, with chair based exercises available. For more information and to book a place, please contact Hansa on [hbhodia@openage.org.uk](mailto:hbhodia@openage.org.uk) or call Open Age on 020 8962 4141

### Timetable:

**Westway Sports Centre, 1 Crowthorne Road, W10 6RP** Tuesdays 10:30am - 11:30am  
**Earls Court Health & Wellbeing Centre, 2b Hogarth Road, SW5 0PT** Fridays 10:45am - 11:45am  
**Second Half Centre, St Charles Hospital, Exmoor St, W10 6DZ** Fridays 2:00pm - 3:00pm



# Annie's View

*'I have just reached 70'*

*... "Age UK K&C exists to answer our questions and give support - a friend indeed!"*



Writer and Age UK K&C member Annie Redmile shares her 'story of ageing' and some of the discoveries she has made along the way.

I have just reached 70! Did the world change overnight? No. But, I had an extraordinary long weekend of celebrations. It was wonderful. And, it confirmed my belief that 'friendship' is so very important to me – and my quality of life. I confess however that I need longer recovery time these days!

Family may be the support you are looking for – or may not. But, if like me you have no family, then friends matter even more. But I do worry that I might put pressure on friends in the future when my needs become greater. And, I don't feel I

can take their support for granted. In my opinion, this is when searching for solutions for the future is the natural thing to do. I don't want to panic when I find I have additional needs and I don't know where to go.

This is the reason I am writing this column. I want to ask the questions that we all need answering. One thing I do know, in the future the voluntary sector will be more important than ever. Age UK K&C exists to answer our questions and give support – a friend indeed! I have been surprised at how many answers the organisation

can provide and how much support. It is a really good place to start.

*If you would like to know more about the services Age UK K&C can offer, visit [www.aukc.org.uk](http://www.aukc.org.uk), or give us a call on 020 8969 9105. We are open Monday-Friday, 9:30-5:30pm (closed 1-2pm for lunch).*



## Connecting you with

## businesses that you can trust!

Looking for a reliable and trusted business? Then use the Age UK London Business Directory, we have an extensive list of businesses that have all been checked and vetted.



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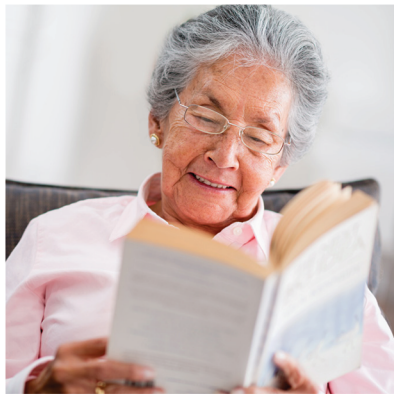
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## Your home from home



The Chiswick Nursing Centre offers a welcoming and caring environment for older people and for those who are now too frail or ill to continue living in their own home. Our dedicated, fully qualified staff offer the highest standards of person-centred, residential and nursing care.

Our experienced staff appreciate that no-one's needs remain the same over time, so we tailor our care to your changing requirements. You can rest assured that you or your loved one are in the safest hands and will be treated professionally, with dignity and compassion. We are registered and inspected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Referrals can be made personally or by GPs, consultants or by your Health and Social Services team.

In addition we can help with a range of other care needs:

- ✓ Long-term care
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- ✓ Care for younger people with disabilities
- ✓ Outpatient physiotherapy

The Chiswick Nursing Centre is a dynamic environment with many events and activities arranged each week. Mealtimes are important, social occasions and we pay great attention to ensuring that our food is both nutritious and delicious. In addition, we have an on-site physio gymnasium, internet café, occupational therapy kitchen, snoezelen therapy room and hairdressing salon.

To arrange a visit or to find out more information call **020 8222 7800**

or email [enquiries@chiswicknursingcentre.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@chiswicknursingcentre.co.uk)