



# PIGEON POST


Keeping you informed & involved  
January 2021



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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE



Welcome to the January issue of Pigeon Post. Sadly we are in another lockdown, but the end is hopefully in sight with the vaccination roll out. We've got a packed issue of tips, nostalgia, recipes, crafts and puzzles – and more contributions from you, including a wonderful poem by Barnet resident Sandy about an imaginary lockdown adventure.

We are also launching Pet Pal of the Month! This is your chance to celebrate your pet and tell us a little bit about them. We've had our dog Monty for nearly nine years and wouldn't be without him. Thanks to him, we have got out of the house more often for walks, we've discovered new places and we've met new friends – and their dogs of course. Studies say it's likely we've got stronger immune systems now and our blood pressure may be lower as dogs can reduce stress levels and increase feelings of calm. So many benefits and best of all, he's always there for a warm cuddle, - very welcome on a cold January day!

Anyway, I hope you enjoy this month's issue and keep sending in your suggestions and comments. It's always great to hear from you!

**Helen Newman**  
Chief Executive  
Age UK Barnet

*"May the New Year bless you with health and happiness."*



## BRIGHTEN UP BREAKFAST

**Add colour to your breakfast, says cookery volunteer Kato, and make it into the healthiest meal of the day!**



### The one pan breakfast

Heat a tablespoon of olive oil in a frying pan. Add a few canned artichokes and olives of your choice. Move them to one side and add baby or quartered tomatoes, cut side down. Fry, and scatter with oregano and a handful of chopped spinach. Move over and in the free part of the pan, crack one or two eggs. Once the translucent part has turned white, cover and cook for 3-4 minutes until the yolk is cooked through. Squeeze a little lemon juice over the vegetables.

Use the one-pan method to experiment with different combinations of vegetables. Heat 1 tbsp of olive oil and fry a few mushrooms and tarragon on one side of the pan. Then add halved baby tomatoes and chopped courgette with chopped garlic. Move over the tomatoes, and add 1/3 tin of white beans covered in a paste of 50ml boiling water, 1 tsp tomato puree and 1/4 tsp chili powder. Add chopped spinach and a few sun-dried tomatoes to the remaining section of the pan. Cover and cook for 2-3 minutes. Or fry 1/2 a sliced red onion, move over and fry 1/2 cup cooked sweet potato cubes mixed with a quarter cup black beans flavoured with 1 tsp cajun spice blend. Once cooked, add a chopped tomato, 1/4 sliced avocado and a handful of chopped coriander leaves and serve.

**Top tip: Prepare ingredients the night before to speed up the cooking.**



### Smoothies

In a blender, add one frozen sliced banana, a handful of any frozen/fresh red or blue berries, a cup of cow/nut milk, a handful of any nuts of your choice, and 3 tbsp of oats. Blend until smooth, add 1-2 tsp of honey or maple syrup if you prefer a sweeter taste.

Alternatively, blend one roll of frozen leaf spinach, half a cup of frozen mango/pineapple (or other tropical fruit pieces), and a cup of coconut water.

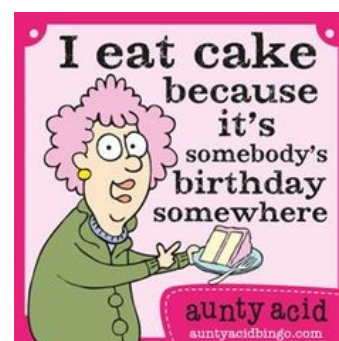
Top tip: For a creamy consistency in milk-based smoothies, add a quarter avocado. If you are using red or black berries, add a quarter cooked beetroot for sweetness instead of the avocado.



### Fun with oats

Add 1/2 cup of oats in 1/2 cup of cow or nut milk. Cook in the microwave for 4 minutes. Add any of the following toppings: a handful of frozen berries cooked for 5 minutes with some honey, grated apple or pear, and a sprinkle of cinnamon, prepared apple sauce, sliced banana and maple syrup, a mix of chopped dry fruit (cranberries, apricots) and roasted nuts. Or prepare your own bircher muesli: in a glass bowl, mix 1/2 cup oats, 1/2 cup plain yoghurt, the juice of any one citrus fruit, one grated apple with skin, 2 tbsp chopped dry fruit, 2 tbsp toasted chopped nuts, and a mix of 2

tbsp toasted pumpkin and sunflower seeds. Leave in the fridge overnight.





## 'I need to get to EN5. Alive!' - a poem by Sandy Mead for her Mum Edna.....

The regulations ebb and flow -  
 You don't know where the hell to go.  
 Bubbles here and bubbles there.  
 That group of six who may not care.  
 And will they bring on Tier 3?  
 A year alone, no company -  
 It's all too much for Mrs E.  
 She packs her bags and, finally,  
 She locks the door. She's going to flee.  
 A gritter stops - she's hitched a lift.  
 Stage 1 is done as snowflakes drift.  
 A piece of cake, a flask of tea -  
 All thanks to Bob from PCC.  
 Too late, she finds the border's hard -  
 West Mercia police are on their guard.  
 But Mum sneaks past - gets through the net.  
 No problem there - it's not the Met!  
 So, Mrs E's now on the run -  
 Her epic journey has begun.  
 Her finest hour? Her Great Escape?  
 More Batgirl in her mask and cape.  
 But . . . . .  
 She toddles 40 feet or less.  
 She's lost a shoe and ripped her dress.  
 Her injured foot is caked in blood.  
 Her wheelie-case is stuck in mud.  
 And then . . . .  
 She's spotted by the thin blue line.  
 She's breathless, tired - she knows the sign  
 And stops before she pops her clogs.  
 She can't outrun the sniffer dogs.  
 You're nicked, old girl just hold it there.  
 Stay calm - you're not going anywhere.  
 But then . . . . .  
 It all kicks off - she's not outdone -  
 She flings a punch and tries to run.  
 She's rugby-tackled to the ground  
 And cries I'm old, alone and London bound.  
 It's Christmas and I'm 85 -  
 I need to get to EN5. Alive.  
 And officer, I'm far too frail  
 To spend my twilight years in jail.

Please have a heart - I'm just a nan.  
 Don't put me in a Serco van.  
 "Well, seeing as you're on your own  
 And trying to face the great unknown,  
 Step in the car, your seatbelt on.  
 I'll make a call and then we're gone."  
 A special escort - blues and twos  
 Starts pushing through the endless queues.  
 M54, M6, M1.  
 (She's sure the speedo reached a ton).  
 Then late at night, I hear a knock.  
 That dreaded sight  
 Of uniformed police that might  
 Be bringing you the news you fear.  
 But then, I hear the words "Your mum, she's  
 here".  
 She's looking sheepish, guilty, cuffed!  
 But I know Mum - deep down, she's chuffed.  
 Right then Mum - what HAVE you done???  
 Nothing dear - just having fun.  
 And the truth?  
 "Not only did she break the law,  
 She nearly broke my colleague's jaw.  
 She embarked upon a life of crime  
 But rest assured, she's done her time.  
 She's staying cuffed - she won't be free  
 Until we've had a cup of tea.  
 Can't take the risk - another cop  
 May get a swift, karate chop!  
 But all is well - our job is done.  
 She fought the law and . . . guess who won?"  
 And, so, the copper waves and smiles.  
 The journey back? 200 miles.  
 And then I woke up.  
 This year is long for those alone.  
 For god's sake just pick up the phone  
 Before you don an extra vest  
 Then break the rules and risk arrest.  
 I'd like to wave a magic wand.  
 Like HRH and Mr Bond -  
 At Christmas time, if all else fails,  
 We'll parachute her out of Wales.

*In memory of Mrs Edna Evans  
 23/12/1936 - 04/01/2021*





# OVER TO YOU!

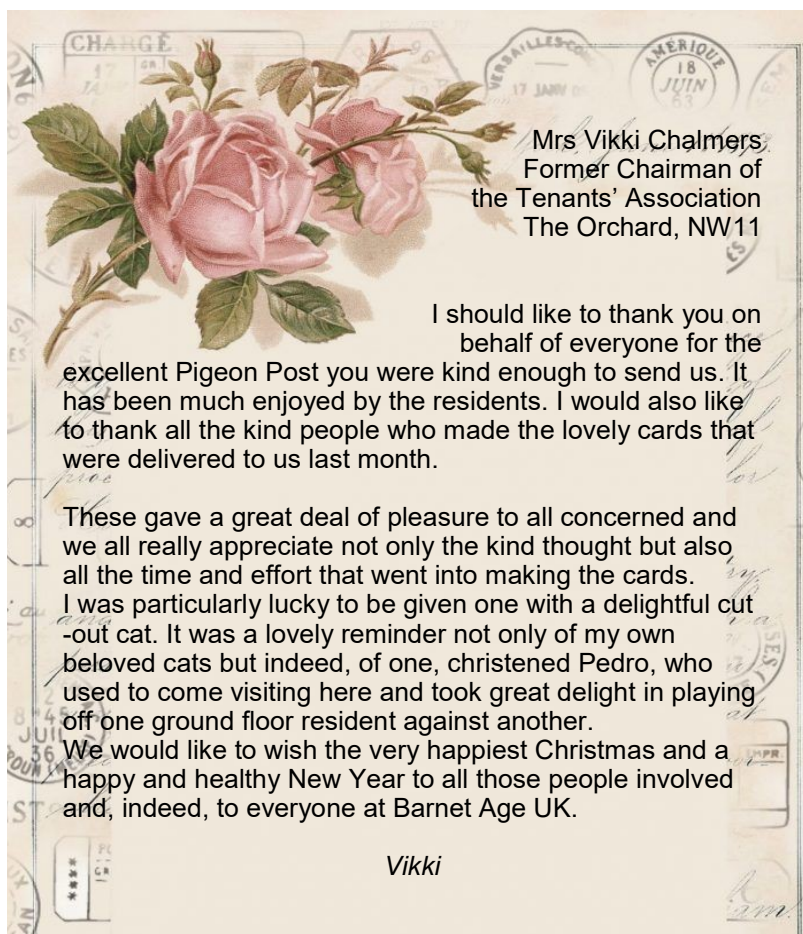


## YOUR LIVES, YOUR STORIES!



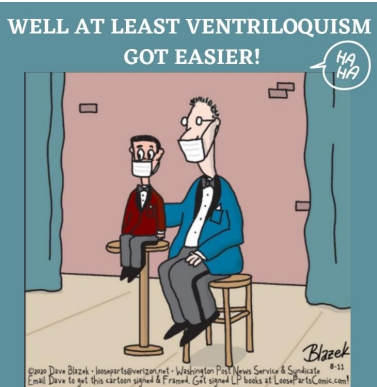
Maybe you've got a cleaning tip, recipe idea, a useful piece of advice or a funny story? Whatever you want to get off your chest, put it to paper and send it to us at **Age UK Barnet Letters Page, Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, East Finchley N2 8LT. Or call Teresa on 07502 989 403.**

We will try to address any issues raised in future editions and will print a selection of the letters we receive.



Protect your hardwood by removing small marks with a sock or clean tennis ball. To erase bigger scuffs, add a little baking soda to a damp cloth and gently rub. Then rinse with a damp paper towel and dry.

**June - Mill Hill**



'Write a letter to someone you have lost touch with, pen a poem to let a friend or family member know how you feel about them, or put your thoughts down in a journal. Writing down difficult or sad thoughts will release them from ruminating in your head and affecting your body. Writing down the positive feelings and happy thoughts you have had will help you to remember and savour them for longer.'

Barnet counsellor Ruth Dines on the power of writing things down.  
Tel: 0797 366 6551

## YOUR LIVES, YOUR STORIES!



**Each month our reporter Linda Jackson has a lovely chat with one of you readers and shares your stories with the rest of us. This month Linda speaks to Della from Barnet.**

Della is a forthcoming and articulate lady in her early eighties. She was a resident of Barnet before she went to Spain as a widow at the age of 60, and stayed there for 15 years before returning to the UK. She has been in her present flat for seven years. She has no family in Barnet, as her daughter lives in the country but her neighbours are friendly and she never feels lonely. She still drives and will meet a friend in the park for a socially distanced walk and chat. She is sensible about social distancing and will drive to the supermarket when she needs supplies. Della enjoys creative writing. She has had an interesting life travelling all over the world with her husband, and has been tempted to write a story of her life "for my own interest". In Spain she was involved in property, and took a psychology course with a view to doing counselling, but in the end decided it was not for her. Pre-lockdown she joined the U3A. Della considers herself fortunate. She would not say she is happy but she is content. She says that lockdown is what it is. Nothing is really set in stone, and one must make the best of the situation. She does not consider herself a complainer, and prefers mixing with positive people. Della knows how she wants to live her life, within certain limits, and is quite able to make up her own mind. Lockdown holds no problems for her.



**Has something extraordinary happened to you? Maybe you had an unusual career? Whatever your story, please get in touch if you'd like Linda to share it with us. Please phone Teresa on 07502 989 403.**



## PET PAL OF THE MONTH

We've all spent a lot of time with our pets over the last year and, for many of us, they've been a great comfort in this time of anxiety and uncertainty. So we thought it might be a nice idea to celebrate all our companions. Whether you've got a cat, dog, hamster, goldfish, we'd like to hear a little bit about them. Please send us a pic of your pet if you can – and describe in a few sentences what your pet means to you. Each month we'll pick one and publish one. If you haven't got a photo, give Teresa a ring on **07502 989 403** and we can arrange for a member of our team to take a doorstep photo. If you have a photo, please send to Pet Pal of the month, Age UK Barnet, Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane N2 1LT.



To kick things off, our chief executive Helen tells us about Monty:

'Monty is a white miniature schnauzer – you don't see them very often, we've only ever seen three or four others and on walks he is often confused with a West Highland Terrier or Tintin's dog Snowy - another terrier - which he really doesn't take kindly to. If dogs could roll their eyes, he would.

'He'd also roll them at a few other things, other dogs who make a beeline for mud and go in puddles for a start as he, thankfully, has a real aversion to getting dirty. Also dogs in fancy jumpers, jackets and coats which I like to think I can see him smirking at as they pass by. His list of likes would start with food, sleep and television, particularly any programmes or adverts with cats, dogs or wildlife in. I have photos of him watching all of these as well as snooker, tennis and the occasional bit of golf which may be related to the time there was a squirrel on the green.

'Top of any list would be his humans though. He is watching me now as I type this at home, probably wondering if it's time for a spot of lunch and he'll also

follow me upstairs or to the front door in case I need protection from the laundry basket or the postie. He's always the first to welcome any of us home and his greeting lasts longer and is far more enthusiastic than anyone else. Even if I have only been to the recycle bin.'

## RECIPE TIME....



### VEGGIE STEW WITH DUMPLINGS



#### Ingredients

2 cloves garlic  
1 pepper  
1 leek  
Kale  
2 potatoes  
1 courgette  
1 tin Butter beans  
Bullion or veg stock cube  
Box/packet ready mix dumplings

#### Method

Roughly chop all vegetables into medium sized pieces and add to pan.  
Cover with stock - made up to approx. 1 litre - (or to cover veg.)  
Cook for 40 mins on low heat  
Following instructions on dumpling box and make 6 or 8 dumplings.  
After 40 mins add dumplings to stew, cover and cook on low heat for further 20-25 mins.

*\*You can use whatever vegetables you prefer i.e. carrots, spring greens, onions, leeks etc.*



### HEALTHY SPICE MUFFINS

An easy healthy muffin recipe that is 100% wholewheat and refined sugar free. Sweetened with apple sauce and deliciously spiced with cinnamon, cardamom and cloves.

#### Ingredients

250g wholewheat flour  
1 ½ teaspoons baking powder  
½ teaspoon baking soda  
½ teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
½-1 teaspoon cardamom\*  
½ teaspoon ginger  
¼ teaspoon cloves  
¼ teaspoon allspice  
zest of one orange  
4.5oz unsweetened apple sauce  
2 tablespoons honey  
6 fluid oz milk  
2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
1 large egg  
2 tablespoons unsalted butter melted and cooled slightly

*(Makes 12 muffins)*



#### Method

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Line a muffin tin with paper liners or spray with nonstick cooking spray.

1. In a large bowl, whisk together wholewheat flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, cardamom, ginger, cloves, allspice, and orange zest.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together applesauce, honey, milk, vanilla, and egg until well combined. Whisk in the melted butter.
3. Pour the wet ingredients into the bowl with the dry and stir until barely combined. Do not overmix.
4. Scoop batter into the prepared muffin pan, dividing it evenly among the 12 muffin cups.
5. Bake for 12-15 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into the centre of a muffin comes out clean. Cool in the pan for 5 minutes and then remove to a wire rack to cool completely.

*\*Adjust the amount of cardamom depending if you want lightly spiced or more spiced muffins.*





**Our trustee neuroscientist Catherine Loveday, talks about the importance of nostalgia and why we are more likely to remember the memories from our pasts that are linked with music**

## THE POWER OF MUSIC

We are much more likely to remember tunes that we listened to when we were teenagers and in our twenties – and this applies not just for music but for films, books and even footballers, says Catherine. And it lasts a lifetime – people in their 80s and 90s still show a preference for things they first experienced between the ages of 10 and 30.

The brain's memory systems are at their most efficient during late adolescence and early adulthood. We experience things for the first time, we go through many emotional highs and lows and make many crucial life changing decisions – such as meeting our spouses.

'It's a time when we're forming our identities,' says Catherine. 'And the key reason we return to songs and anecdotes from this period of our lives is that they remind us who we are.'

We are hard-wired to associate music and memory, she says, and there's a part of the brain that is actively linked with music – the medial prefrontal cortex, which is an area of the brain that enables us to recognise experiences that are meaningful and relevant.

So not only are we more likely to remember music from the past, our musical memories are very robust – in people with dementia, for instance, they are still able to access music memories even when other parts of their memory are impaired.

Although objects, photos and clothing can remind us of the past, says Catherine, it seems music is stronger in supporting our autobiographical memories.



## KEEPING OUR MEMORIES ALIVE!

Sharing music from the past connects us with others. Many of us know what it is like to bond over a shared reminiscence for music, comedy or even television adverts.

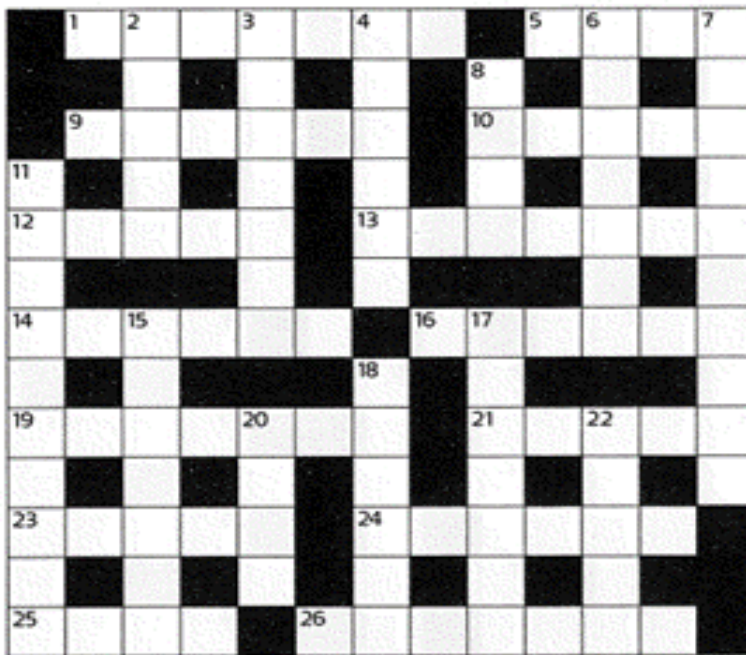
'You don't even have to listen to the song,' says Catherine. 'We found that just thinking about a song from the past can access old memories. However, listening to songs creates a more emotional response.'

By and large, talking about the past and listening to old music has been found to have incredibly positive effects – it improves mental health, makes us more optimistic and makes us feel good about ourselves and less lonely.

Feeling nostalgic doesn't have to mean dwelling on the past, it can enhance our openness to new experiences and foster creativity. It has also been shown that inducing a pleasant nostalgia can even make the weather seem less gloomy.

Studies show that when older adults are asked to remember past experiences, they tend to recall positive events like holidays and special occasions. Younger people, though they can recall positive events, are far more likely to remember negative things, such as accidents and stressful events.

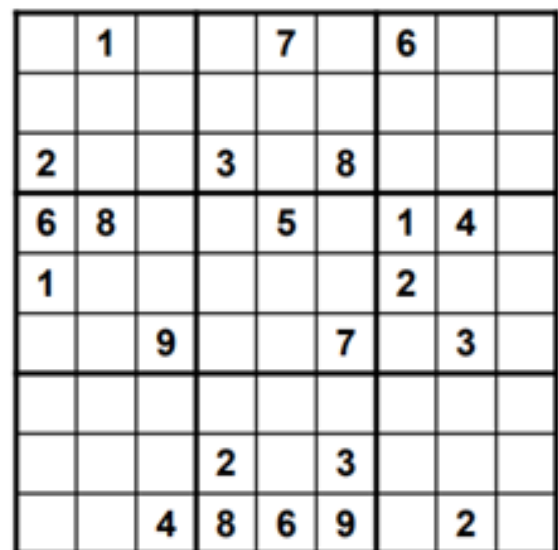
# PUZZLE TIME....



## ACROSS

1	Make ready (7)
5	Options list (4)
9	Brook (6)
10	Spring flower (5)
12	Ward worker (5)
13	Dip (7)
14	Move out (6)
16	Admittance (6)
19	Mounted soldier (7)
21	Synthetic fabric (5)
23	Cheryl _ _ _ & Bucks Fizz singer (5)
24	Actors' union (6)
25	Nelson _ _ _ 1930s singing star (4)
26	Speak out (7)

## SUDOKU



## DOWN

2	Spinning blade (5)
3	Forestall (7)
4	Stay (6)
6	Grow (7)
7	Nasty (10)
8	Stalk (4)
11	Unavoidable (10)
15	Misshapen (7)
17	Behaviour (7)
18	Ice over (6)
20	Section (4)
22	Numbers game (5)

## Old Wives Tales - True or False?

- Cracking your knuckles give you arthritis **Yes/No**
- Chicken soup makes you better **Yes/No**
- Food with mayonnaise goes off faster **Yes/No**
- The full moon causes strange behaviour **Yes/No**
- Chewing gum stays in your stomach for seven years **Yes/No**
- Cutting nails at night summons ghosts **Yes/No**
- Fish is brain food **Yes/No**
- Eat vegetables while pregnant and the baby will love them later **Yes/No**
- Heartburn while pregnant means the baby will have lots of hair! **Yes/No**
- If you cross your eyes they may get stuck **Yes/No**



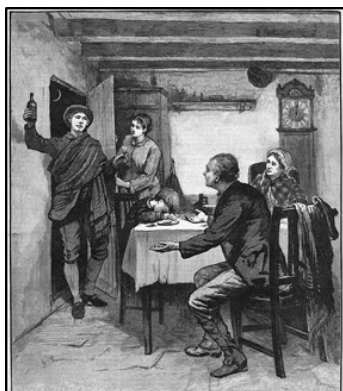
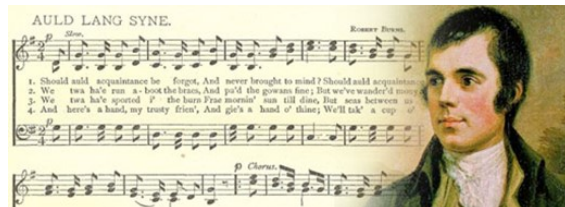




## New Year Celebrations of the Victorian Era *by Donna Klein*

### Hogmanay- Scottish New Year

New Year celebrations have changed over time, even from the beginning to the end of the Victorian era. Prince Albert may have introduced the tradition of the Christmas tree from Germany, but Queen Victoria was obsessed with everything Scottish. There was no bigger holiday during the year in Scotland than New Year's Eve and Day where it is known as Hogmanay or Hegmena and the Queen passed her passion on to her subjects. Traditions associated with Hogmanay include gift giving, which was already popular in England. In wealthier households, New Year was the time for gift giving and payments of rewards to loyal servants.



**'First Foot'** is the Hogmanay tradition of bearing gifts as the first person to cross a threshold after the stroke of midnight. During Victorian times, the guest brought symbolic gifts of black bun (a rich fruit cake), shortbread, coal, salt, and whiskey. The gifts foretold the family's fortune for the year. It was considered lucky if the gift giver was male and dark haired. Blonde hair was an omen for trouble, and women who were not home before midnight were often left wandering around outside until a dark haired male arrived at the home.

### Foretelling the Upcoming Year

Another foretelling of the future was associated with what you were doing at midnight. It was thought that whatever you were doing at midnight would be what you would do for the coming year. This might be why going out and socialising was a popular thing to do at the New Year. Staying home and going to bed might foretell illness or worse during the coming year. Other superstitions include throwing out ashes from the hearth. Throwing them out the night before allows for a clean slate to start the new year right. Doing any kind of work, especially laundry was considered unlucky. Every person, no matter how young, should also have money in their pocket on New Year's Day. To not do this was to risk poverty during the coming year. It was also considered unlucky to have fire leave the house in the form of a lantern or candle, as was having the fire in stove or hearth go out.



### Open Houses

New Year's celebrations moved from New Year's Eve to New Year's Day. During the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the wealthy served guests a wide and varied buffet and egg nog laced with bourbon, rum, or brandy. Everyone donned in their holiday finery. Women and boys up to age 10 stayed home. Gentlemen visited many homes on New Year's Day and eligible bachelors left their calling cards to show they'd visited. Sometimes, it was a competitive event to see how many homes could be visited and how many egg nogs could be drunk before the end of the day. Raucous behaviour saw the holiday evolve




from being an open house to invitation-only affair.



## EASY TO MAKE BIRD FEEDERS



### Ingredients

-  300g birdseeds\* (**see note below**)
- 40g raisins, chopped
- 35g dried cranberries, chopped
-  30g peanuts, chopped
- 15g dried apples, chopped
- 175 ml water
-  3 sachets unflavoured gelatine
- cooking spray or coconut oil

### Materials

- Saucepan
- Cooking spoon
- Skewer or drinking straw
- Cookie cutter
- Greaseproof paper

### **\*Bird feeder ingredients**

Instead of using 2 cups bird seeds and 1 cup dried fruits and nuts, you can also skip the dried fruit and prepare this bird food recipe with 450g bird seeds if you prefer.

Line a baking tray/sheet with greaseproof paper. Spray the inside of cookie cutters with baking spray. Alternatively, grease with coconut oil. A thin coat of cooking spray or oil makes it easier to release the birdseed ornaments. Arrange the ornaments on the lined baking sheet/tray.

Pour the water into a medium-size saucepan and sprinkle with the gelatine. Warm over medium heat until the gelatine has dissolved, for about 3 to 5 minutes. Stir continually to avoid burning. Once the gelatine has dissolved, take off the heat.

Stir in the bird seeds, dried fruit and nuts.  
Mix until the dry ingredients are completely coated in gelatine mixture.



Fill each ornament with bird feeder mixture. Pack and press down tightly until the ornament is full.

**Tip:** The mixture is sticky, so grease your fingertips with a little coconut oil or cooking spray. If the mixture cools down too much, re-warm on the stovetop for 1 to 2 minutes, or until the gelatine is liquid again.



Poke a skewer or straw into each ornament to make a hole for the twine/ribbon.

Let the ornaments dry for a couple of hours or overnight.  
Carefully press the DIY birdseed ornaments out of the cookie cutters.  
String with a ribbon or twine for hanging.

**Storage and shelf life** - Like any food, birdseed ornaments can spoil over time, especially if they're stored improperly. Store bird feeder ornaments in an airtight container or zip-top bag in a dry, cool place, away from moisture and heat. If stored correctly, birdseed ornaments will last for 4 to 6 months. Always check that older ornaments aren't spoiled before hanging them outside.





## Exercise at home: Your spaghetti tin arm workout!

**A couple of arm strengthening moves from our Wendy.**  
***All you need is a kitchen chair and tins from your store cupboard.***



**Picture 1** - Sit tall in chair with feet on floor. Keep your shoulders relaxed down

**For all exercises:**  
**Breathe through exercises, avoid holding your breath.**

**Picture 4** - Begin with both arms down by your side (Picture 1)  
Raise your Left arm out to the side ONLY to shoulder level, and hold for 2 seconds (count "1 and 2 and")  
Lower arm down (Picture 1)  
Repeat with Right arm. (Picture 5)  
Alternate arms 10 times (5 on each arm)  
**\*ALWAYS LOWER ARM BEFORE RAISING OTHER ARM!**



**Picture 2** - Keeping your arm straight, raise your Left arm ONLY to shoulder level, and hold it there for 2 seconds.  
Lower your left arm down (see Picture 1)  
Repeat with your Right arm. (see Picture 3)  
Alternate arms 10 times (5 on each arm)

**\*ALWAYS LOWER ARM BEFORE RAISING OTHER ARM!**



**Picture 5**



**Picture 3**



**Picture 6** - Bring both arms up at a right angle - keeping elbows in line with your shoulders. Keeping your arms at right angles, bring arms together and try to squeeze your elbows together - only going as far as you can.  
Take arms apart back to start position (as in picture 6)  
**Repeat 5 - 10 times**





## How can we help?

Due to the new lockdown we have had to suspend our face to face activities. We hope to resume these as soon as we can. In the meantime, we are offering the following services.

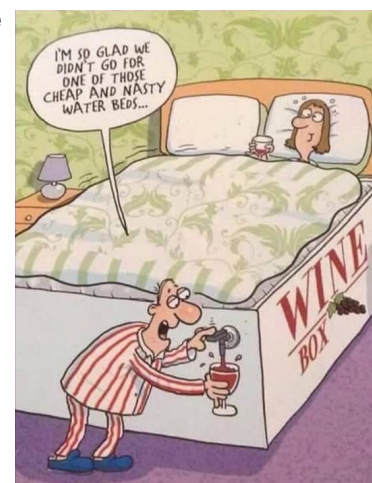
**For advice about benefits, grants, housing and money concerns, phone our Later Life Planning Service on 020 8432 1417.**

Would you enjoy a regular chat over the phone with a friendly volunteer? Try our Befriending Service on **020 8432 1416**

**Need a handyperson to change a lightbulb or fix something in the home? For essential jobs in the home please phone our Handyperson Service on 020 8150 0963. Our handyperson team are kitted in PPE and some jobs such as changing a lightbulb are free of charge.**

Unable to get out to the shops and cannot shop online? We have a new Shopping Service for people who need a light weekly shop. For more info, Tel **020 8150 0963**

**Foot care.** We offer basic nail-cutting (£15) at the Ann Owens Centre in East Finchley and, for people with diabetes, taking steroids or warfarin, we have nail-cutting with a podiatrist (£20). For an appointment, phone **020 8203 5040**. This service has now been suspended during January.



## CONTACT NUMBERS



## A few useful numbers in case of emergency

**Still call your GP surgery if you need an appointment.** Some surgeries offer phone consultations with a GP – speak to your surgery for more information about this. If your GP surgery is closed and you need an urgent appointment, a recorded message will tell you who to contact.

Call **111** for **NHS** urgent medical advice – if you need **emergency help and services** call **999**.

If you suspect you have coronavirus, call **119** to get help or to find your nearest test centre. To get a coronavirus test you must have symptoms of one or more of the following - a high temperature, new contagious cough and/or loss of smell or taste. The test must be completed within 8 days of having symptoms to be effective.

For help on **discharge from hospital**, call **British Red Cross** on **07709 398809** or **07808 202125**.

**If something needs fixing at home**, call the **Age UK London Boroughs Business Directory** to get a list of vetted local trades people such as plumbers and electricians – **0800 3345056**. If you are a **Barnet Homes resident** you can call **020 8080 6587** for repairs or emergency calls.

**Need to speak to someone?** For a friendly chat, day or night, call **Silver Line** on **0800 470 8090**. If you are in a serious mental health crisis, please call the **24-hour Crisis Telephone Service** (for people living in Barnet, Enfield & Haringey) on **0800 151 0023** or phone the **Samaritans** on **116 123**.



**census**  
**2021**

Households across England and Wales will soon be told about the national census which takes place on 21 March 2021. The nationwide survey of housing and the population has been carried out every decade since 1801, with the exception of 1941. The census is for everyone. It's a unique survey that happens every 10 years and gives us a snapshot of all the people in England and Wales. It tells us what our needs are – helping inform decisions about services, like healthcare.

Keep an eye out for a letter with your access code, a bit closer to the time. Although the census has gone online, there will be plenty of help for those who don't have access to a computer.



## Handyperson Q&A

### ***How can I save on my energy bills? Archie, Burnt Oak***

Turn lights off when you leave a room, but not at the expense of your safety. Keep stairs and other areas well lit to reduce the risk of falling. You could save £14 a year just by turning off the lights when you don't need them on.

By changing from traditional light bulbs to LED bulbs, you could save between £3 and £6 a year per bulb, depending on the type of bulb you replace.

Switch appliances off when they're not in use rather than leaving them on standby. This can save around £30 a year.

Defrost your freezer every six months - this will ensure it runs efficiently.

Shower instead of taking a bath. A short shower can use a third of the amount of water needed for a bath. If you prefer taking baths, consider filling the tub slightly less – the average full bath uses 80 litres of water.

Fix any dripping taps. A dripping tap can waste the equivalent of half a bath a week. If you're on a water meter, a dripping tap could cost an extra £15 per year.

Do the washing up in a bowl rather than under running water to save around £25 per year. And only boil the amount of water you need for hot drinks.

**Our Handyperson Service can help you check your home to try and keep you warm and safe over the winter months – from checking and bleeding radiators to assisting with draught proofing. Our handyperson team are all vetted and wear full PPE. We charge an hourly rate of £25 per hour and £15 per hour for those on the following means tested and disability benefits. For an appointment call 020 8150 0963.**

## NEW YEAR FUN FACTS

- From the 12th century until Britain adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1752, the official new year was not on January 1 but on March 25.
- Scotland changed its New Year's Day to January 1 in 1600.
- January is named for the two-headed god Janus who could look backward and forward, to the old year and the new, at the same time.
- In Ethiopia, New Year's Day is celebrated on September 11 or 12.
- An old superstition thought it unlucky to sweep your floor out of the door on January 1. For good luck, you should sweep from door to hearth.
- In Islamic countries, including Iran and Saudi Arabia, partying will be subdued during Ramadan. Israel, meanwhile, observes the western New Year, but there is a Jewish New Year in September.
- The ancient Egyptians, Chinese and Romans all celebrated New Year on different days. Even within western Christianity, the day has drifted, with Christmas Day, Easter Day and March 1 and 25 all popular. Because the festival was linked to the pagan event of Saturnalia, early Christians called for the New Year to be marked by prayer, fasting and 'humiliation'.

## HEALTHWATCH



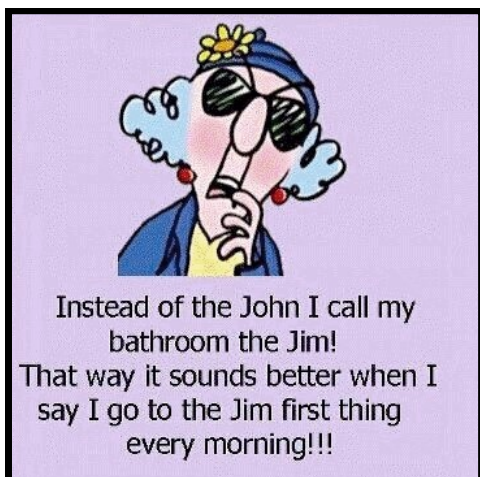
## Healthwatch Barnet

Healthwatch Barnet is keen to hear from you about your experience of health and social care services in Barnet to help improve services. To take part in the survey, simply give them a ring on **020 3475 1308** to arrange a time and day that is convenient for you. The phonenumber is open **Tuesday - Friday 9am to 5pm.**

## And finally.....

If you have enjoyed this newsletter, please let us know. Just drop us a line at **Newsletter, Age UK Barnet, Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, East Finchley N2 8LT.**

*We look forward to hearing from you.*



### Answer to Sudoku on P8

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

### Answers to crossword on P8

Across: 1. Prepare, 5. Menu, 9. Stream, 10. Tulip  
12. Nurse, 13. Immerse, 14. Vacate, 16. Access, 19.  
Trooper, 21. Nylon, 23. Baker, 24. Equity, 25. Eddy,  
26. Mention.

Down: 2. Rotor, 3. Prevent, 4. Remain, 6. Enlarge,  
7. Unpleasant, 8. Stem, 11 Inevitable, 15. Crooked,  
17. Conduct, 18. Freeze, 20. Part, 22. Lotto

*"We hope you have enjoyed our little newsletter – please join us again next month!"*

### Answers: Old Wives Tales - True or False? P8

1. False - There is no evidence cracking your knuckles leads to arthritis.
2. True - Scientists have found that chicken soup reduces inflammation by slowing down white blood cell activity responsible for inflammation.
3. False - On the contrary, it prevents spoilage because of its acidity levels.
4. True - For some people, several studies have proven that there are more emergencies on nights with a full moon.
5. False - Our digestive system gets rid of it pretty fast.
6. False - Nonsense!
7. True - A study in 1914 linked "a weekly meal of baked and boiled fish contributed to better memory".
8. True - What the mother eats is likely to influence the baby's inclinations in the future.
9. True - There is evidence that 82% of women with severe heartburn had babies with lots of hair!
10. False - Nonsense!

