

# PIGEON POST

Keeping you informed & involved

November/December 2024



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## Welcome

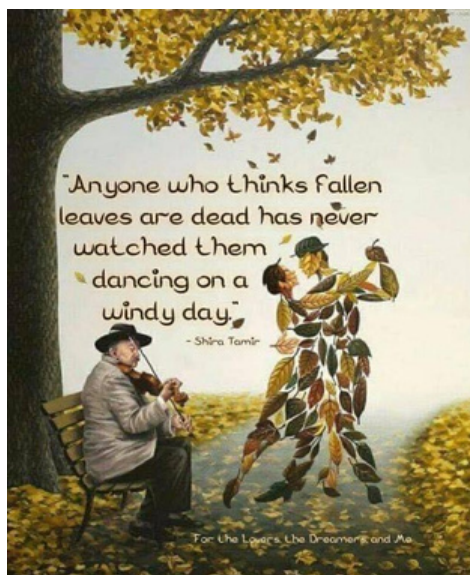
The festive season is around the corner and we've got plenty of lovely festive events lined up for you, including a festive disco for over 50s, an afternoon tea at Whitefield School and a couple of Christmas concerts and singalongs.

We hope to see some of you there, ready to sing your hearts out or dance the evening away.

My top takeaway tips from this issue include the importance of getting up out of your chair every 30 minutes and how to turn our negative emotion like anger, anxiety and boredom into positive forces – even being in a low mood can make us more focused and efficient apparently!

Wishing you all a Happy Christmas - when it comes, and a very joyous, warm, and wonderful festive season.

Helen Newman  
Chief Executive  
Age UK Barnet



Many people find that their appetite becomes smaller as they get older. 'This is because we produce less saliva as we age and we have lower levels of 'hunger' hormones and higher levels of 'fullness' hormones,' says volunteer and trainee dietitian Kato. 'Also, our sense of taste and smell gets worse and we need less energy due to muscle loss and the fact we tend to move around less.'

'We are also more likely to have poor dental and oral health, as well as chronic pain, acute and chronic diseases and infections, and take more medications. All of these can cause a loss of appetite.'

The problem is that a small appetite can lead to weight loss and nutritional deficiencies which increases the risk of falls, fractures and frailty and weakens our immune system, and means our wounds and infections take longer to heal.

'We might need fewer calories when we're over 65 but we still need the same amount of good fats, vitamins, minerals, and plant chemicals than younger people,' says Kato. 'Moreover, we need slightly more protein, calcium, Vitamins B12 and folate.'

## Strategies for staying well nourished

### 1. Eat little and often

Reduce meal portions and eat snacks that are high in protein, good fats and essential micronutrients like:

- Wholegrain crackers and hard cheese or humus
- Whipped cottage cheese with honey, vanilla, nuts and berries
- Dates, or apple and banana slices with nut butters
- Milkshakes with frozen berries and nut butter
- A small cup of left-over soup and crackers/toast
- A boiled egg or ½ avocado, mashed on toast
- A small pot of Greek yoghurt with honey and nuts



### 2. Add colour and flavour to meals

To stimulate the taste buds and visual senses add colour to soups, stews, and salads. Try a handful of greens with red chilli flakes in chicken soup, a fried egg on top of a tomato stew with greens, red and yellow fruits and vegetables in salads, and contrasting colours of vegetables, for examples carrots and peas, in vegetable stews or curries. Try to eat 2-3 small portions of differently flavoured and coloured dishes, instead of a large portion of one dish. Instead of adding more salt to enhance flavour, try adding lemon juice, chilli flakes, cumin, paprika, or dried herbs instead.

### 3. Enrich your favourite foods

By adding simple calorie and protein boosters to your favourite soups, stews, mashed vegetables and shakes, you can increase the nutrient value. For example, add a large handful of grated cheese, 2tbsp soy or whey protein powder, or ½ cup Greek yoghurt to soups, stews and mashed veggies. Enrich a pint of whole milk with 4tbsp skimmed milk powder, to use in coffee, tea, sauces, and milkshakes. Add a tbsp of nut butter and 1/3rd avocado to a home-made frozen fruit milkshake.

**MOST IMPORTANTLY, ENJOY MEALTIMES, whether eating alone or with others.**

### Pea soup with mint and dill (serves 6)

Ingredients: 2tbsp rapeseed oil 2 onions, finely chopped 1 garlic clove, crushed 1 green chilli, deseeded, chopped 500g frozen peas 500ml vegetable stock 40g mint leaves, 40g dill Juice of ½ lemon, zest of 1 lemon

Method:

1. Warm the oil in a pan and sweat the onion and garlic for 8 minutes on low heat. Add the chilli and cook for 2 minutes
2. Add the peas and stock, bring to simmer and cook for 5 minutes
3. Add mint and dill and blend with a stick blender
4. Add lemon zest and juice, top with mix of toasted pumpkin and sunflower seeds and serve



## SCAMS WATCH PARKING FINES SCAM

**SCAM  
ALERT**



Scammers are impersonating the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) with fake parking fine claims and 'final warning' messages.

First, The DVSA doesn't issue parking tickets or parking fines. It's a government body that oversees driving safety and carries out driving tests and MOTs. Also, texts or emails threatening parking charges are always fake. Real Penalty Charge Notices or parking charge notices must be sent to you by letter through the post.

The letter will be addressed to you personally and will include your vehicle registration number, details about where and when the parking contravention happened, and will often include photos of where your car was parked. Also,

According to Which? there are other telltale signs that the texts and emails are fake including grammatical errors and the use of the phrase 'parking penalty charge.' There are only two types of parking fines you can get and they're called a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) or a parking charge notice, not a 'parking penalty charge.'

**For more advice on scams prevention, please contact Joyce and the scams support team on 020 8203 5040. They can give you the tools to spot a scam and support you if you have been a victim of a scam**



## DAULAT JIWA A BARNET LEGEND!



We're pleased that Daulat Jiwa, the founder of Barnet Asian Women's Association (BAWA), has been recognised as a Barnet Legend, part of a new public art trail celebrating 21 inspirational figures who have contributed to the borough's rich and unique cultural tapestry. Daulat, who sadly died in 2020, was mother in law to our outreach coordinator Salima Jiwa. 'She was an inspiration to so many woman and set up BAWA to create a space in Barnet for South Asian women to be themselves,' says Salima. You can see the Daulat Jiwa art plaque in Friary House, Friary Park. Other Barnet legends include 'Forces' sweetheart' Vera Lynn at the Royal Airforce Museum, Cricket and football legend Denis Compton at Hendon Leisure Centre and London Tube map designer Harry Beck at Finchley Church End library.





## SPARKLING PLATES AT THE ANN OWENS CENTRE!



Big thanks to our generous exercise and cookery class goer (who prefers not to be named - but she knows who she is!). She has donated nearly £3,000 to buy us a commercial dishwasher, transforming our dementia day club and cookery sessions. With two and a half minute cycles, volunteers and staff can now spend more time with clients!

CEO Helen, pictured with the new dishwasher, says: 'One of the volunteers actually did a dance for joy when she saw it last week! It will also make such a difference to our other activities as well as reducing our impact on the environment.'



## CAT POWER!

## CAT MOSS UPDATE!



Hallo Pigeon Post Readers, I hope you are all well and have enjoyed the summer sunshine and occasional downpours. I cannot begin to tell you how busy I have been supervising the digging up of the communal grass lawn and the seeding of the new clover lawn. It took a lot of persuading from Charlotte (Age UK Barnet volunteer and my housekeeper) that this would be a good idea as it is eco-friendly. I liked chewing on the grass when I felt the need for a bit of a tonic. The place looked like the Somme battlefield for a while but now the clover has appeared and looks wonderful and actually is very tasty and certainly helps my digestion.



As you know, cats appreciate comfy, cosy places to have a well-earned rest and snooze. Well, would you believe it Charlotte and her neighbours decided it would be a jolly nice idea to build a pergola on their communal lawn to encourage everyone to use the garden and then bought unbelievably comfy furniture to sit on. I have, of course, taken it upon myself to test the furniture and have given it my seal of approval. Nobody has complained that I have a daily snooze on one of the footstools. I live here too. I have cat rights!

By the way, did you know that there is a series of cosy crime novels about a detective who is a cat and can talk? Honestly, no word of a lie. Charlotte has read them and says the Age UK Barnet book club should read the first one - *The Cat Who Caught A Killer* by L T Shearer. The cat is called Conrad. I kid you not.

Anyway folks, it's been nice catching up with you. Wishing you a lovely, warm, golden autumn. Beware of slippery fallen leaves please. Sending you all love and purrs. Suki xx





**Each month former journalist Ed Newman has a lovely chat with a Barnet resident and shares their story with the rest of us. This month Ed Speaks to George Fuller who lives in Thomas Watson Cottages, sheltered housing for people who used to work in the freight industries.**

Like many young boys, George Fuller dreamed of being an engine driver when he grew up. He would have realised that ambition as well, if it hadn't been for the love of a good woman.

George worked on the railways for many years in the post-war period, either side of doing his national service in Germany. As a 15 year-old, he started by cleaning the engines and worked his way up to being a senior fireman working alongside the driver on freight trains. However, by the time he was invited to try his hand at being a driver himself, he'd already agreed to forget his railway dreams and get married. 'When I asked Sheila to marry me, she said yes but told me I would have to give up my job,' genial George told Pigeon Post. 'She didn't like the idea of me doing shifts and working long hours. I'd got a letter offering me the opportunity of becoming a driver but by then it was too late. Love came first. So, I never did get to drive a steam train but I did ride on the footplate of some great engines like the Flying Scotsman and the Mallard and travel at speeds of over 100mph!'

George certainly has no other regrets about his marriage to Sheila in Muswell Hill in 1959. That was followed by the arrival of their son Kevin a year later and daughter Julie in 1963. These days he's got a host of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who have regularly kept him company since Sheila's sad passing. They spent their final years together in the idyllic setting of the Thomas Watson cottages, one of Barnet's best-kept secrets.

'You won't see the cottages advertised in any national newspapers,' says George. 'They're only for people who have worked in the freight world in whatever job. We heard about it through word of mouth but I already knew where it was from my days as a delivery driver.'

The Thomas Watson cottages are a rather different environment to where six-year-old George found himself at the outbreak of the Second World War, sharing a room with his mother and younger sister in Hornsey while his father went off to serve with the Eighth army in North Africa. Before long, like thousands of other children, he was evacuated to a place a long way from home.

'My first real memory is standing on the platform at Paddington Station wearing my name tag with my rucksack on my back,' George recalls. 'Our whole school in Hornsey was evacuated to Cornwall. When we got to Newquay we were taken into a hall and there were local people there who'd come to pick children to take home. I think a boy called David and myself were the last ones to be chosen by a couple called Mr and Mrs Phillips. We didn't really know what was going on. The Hornsey boys were city lads and a bit feral. We got up to some scrapes including trying to sell horse manure to the farmers, not realising it was from their horses. We did go to school there but I don't remember getting much education, although Mr Phillips did teach how to look after chickens.'

Eventually, George returned to London before being sent to stay with relatives in a mining community in the North-East. It was there he remembers celebrating VE Day with his family although it was quite a while before his father returned and they could get to know each other for the first time.

'He just arrived unannounced at the door one day and I knew it was him,' George recalls. 'I can remember one of the things he did was take us swimming. His method was to throw us into the pool but I didn't like that and never actually learned to swim.'

After two more years in school, he was finally able to follow his ambition to work on the railways. His first job was cleaning the engines, a task that never really ended.

'At the age of 15, I was working a 48 hour week but I didn't mind. I loved the railway and if they'd shown me a £1 note I would have worked for it. Then, when I was 17, I was given the chance to learn how to be a fireman and actually be inside the engine. I remember on our first training run, I was given the leg between Kings Cross and Finsbury Park which was all uphill and very hard work but I loved it. It wasn't long before I was getting a lot of work and good money for my age.'

At 18, George had to go off to do his national service. He'd asked to be posted to Korea, Malaysia or Kenya but ended up spending two years in a military hospital in Germany working as a ward manager. That involved organising all the operations, postmortems and procedures and even witnessing a few himself. By the end of his two years, he even considered a hospital career before returning to his beloved railways where he worked as a fireman for several years until he met Sheila.

'She was a friend of my sister Betty, and one day she brought her back to the house. I was asleep on the settee at the time, they woke me up and that's how it was.'

George would do a number of driving and delivery jobs, including working as a chauffeur for a businessman, who even had him drive to the South of France. Sheila also worked for the same boss and sometimes George would be told to pick her up and take her to the clothing factory where she could choose herself a new coat. Even at 91, George remains active in both mind and body. He went on his latest cruise earlier this year, he's always busy with his gardening and likes a game of scrabble or solitaire.

'There's always something to do at Thomas Watson and it's up to you if you want to get involved,' he says. 'I love it here.'



## RECIPE TIME

## WINTER BREAKFAST HASH



### Ingredients

375g potatoes, cut into small chunks  
1 tbsp rapeseed oil  
1 onion (about 200g), chopped  
½ tsp caraway seeds

2 garlic cloves, chopped  
1 green pepper, deseeded and diced  
200g large brussels sprouts, trimmed and sliced  
2 eggs

| Nutrition: Per serving |     |           |       |        |               |         |      |
|------------------------|-----|-----------|-------|--------|---------------|---------|------|
| kcal                   | fat | saturates | carbs | sugars | high in fibre | protein | salt |
| 370                    | 13g | 2g        | 42g   | 12g    | 12g           | 15g     | 0.2g |



### Method

Boil the potatoes for 15 mins until tender. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large non-stick frying pan over a medium heat and fry the onion for 8 mins, stirring frequently until it starts to colour. Add the caraway, garlic, pepper and sprouts and cook for 5 mins more with the lid on the pan so they steam at the same time.

Drain and lightly crush the cooked potatoes using a masher. Stir them into the vegetables and cook for 5-10 mins, turning occasionally so the mixture browns.

Meanwhile, poach the eggs for a few minutes for a runny yolk or until cooked to your liking. Remove from the pan using a slotted spoon. Serve each portion of hash topped with an egg.

## WINTER FRUITCAKE

**This festive icing is easy to use, looks amazing and makes a lighter end to a meal. The perfect centrepiece for Christmas tea**

### Ingredients

1 egg white  
50g caster sugar  
small bunch black grapes  
holly or bay leaves  
20cm/8 inch round fruitcake  
1-2 clementines  
1-2 just ripe figs

a few kumquat  
a few physalis (Cape gooseberries)  
approx 65cm red or gold ribbon  
**For the frosting**  
2 egg whites  
175g icing sugar



### Method

Lightly beat the egg white in a shallow bowl and spread out the caster sugar on a baking sheet or tray. Dip the grapes and the holly or bay leaves into the egg white, or use a paintbrush. Shake off the excess, then coat in the sugar. Set aside to dry for at least 10 mins, ideally about 30 mins.

When you're ready to decorate, make the frosting. Put a large bowl over a pan of simmering water, making sure the bottom of the bowl does not touch the water. Put the egg whites and icing sugar into the bowl and whisk for 5-7 mins until you have a thick, very glossy frosting. Use a spatula to clean around the edges of the bowl every so often as you whisk. Scoop the frosting onto the top of the cake and spread it around with a flat-edged knife, swirling as you go to create a snowy effect (see Knowhow, below).

Halve the clementines, figs and kumquats, then arrange on top of the frosted cake with the physalis, frosted grapes and leaves. Fix a ribbon around the base and leave the cake somewhere cool – but not the fridge. The frosting used is essentially a meringue, with the egg being cooked by the heat of the water it's whisked over. For a deep, swirled topping, dollop a few good spoonfuls of the frosting on top, then gently paddle the frosting out to the sides of the cake with a palette or a flat-edged knife. The frosting is more forgiving than other icings in case you make a mistake, although try to avoid moving it around more than 5 minutes after putting it on the cake.

**Note: You do not have to use fresh fruit to decorate the cake, it's all up to you.**



**With shorter days and cooler weather, we may go out less and find that we are spending more time at home. This month, former physiotherapist Gillian Jordan focuses on why we should get up and move around.**

Chances are we're sitting down, in armchairs or at the table, for longer periods than in the warmer months. 'Unfortunately there is increasing evidence that long periods of time spent sitting are not good for us in many ways,' says Gillian. 'General fitness deteriorates, so pre-existing conditions might worsen, muscles weaken, especially the important core stabilisers round our stomach and lower back. It also negatively affects circulation and can lead to swollen ankles. Our spines become stiffer and the muscles which bend the hip tighten and become weaker.'

### **So what can we do about it?**

Regular breaks from sitting can boost circulation, improve mood, and enhance energy levels. Simple actions like standing up every 30 minutes, stretching, or taking short walks around your home can make a big difference. Even gentle exercises, like calf raises or seated leg lifts, can help.

By making a conscious effort to sit less and move more, we can improve our physical health, reduce risks associated with prolonged sitting, and feel more energised throughout the day. Small changes in habits can lead to significant long-term benefits.

### **Sitting to standing**

But in order to keep getting up and moving around, it's important to have the basics right, says Gillian – that means, going from sitting and standing and back to sitting safely without too much difficulty.

Practice from an upright chair, if you can, one without arms. But if you need to use the arms of the chair, as you get stronger, gradually reduce your dependence on them.



1. Move to the front of the chair.
2. Bend your knees and have your feet flat on the floor.
3. Lean forward from the hips, keeping your back straight. This step is very important! If you lean forward far enough, gravity can actually help you stand up! Your head should move forward during this step.
4. Then begin to straighten your knees, using thigh and buttock muscles.
5. As your legs straighten, lift your trunk until you are upright.
6. Stand tall – you've done it

### **To sit down again:**

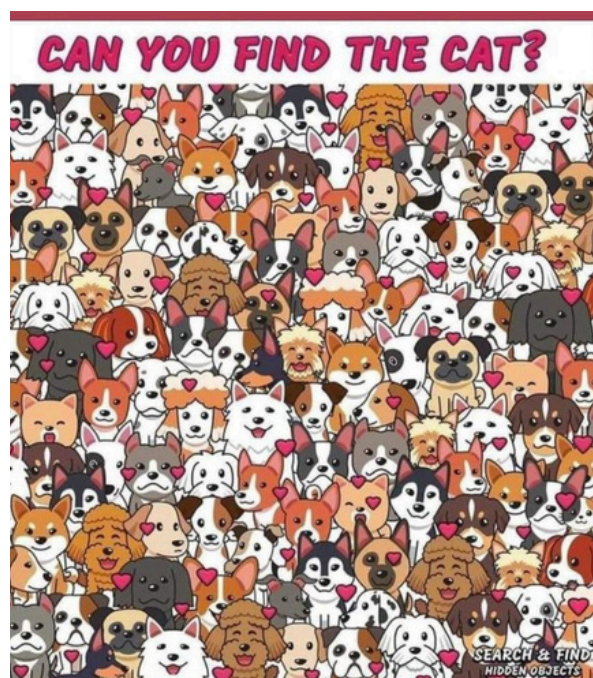
1. Feel the edge of the chair with the back of your legs and reach your hands down and back so they touch the chair.
2. Slowly reverse the procedure, bending the hips and knees until your buttocks are securely in the seat of the chair
3. Wriggle your bottom back so that you are comfortable.

Standing from a low and even squashy sofa or armchair is, of course, much harder and you will probably need to use your hands and arms to help you get to standing. But practising sitting to standing from a firmer and higher chair will ensure that you become stronger when doing so from lower chairs.

“

**A good way to help increase leg strength is to practice standing up and sitting down several times every time you get out of the chair – build up to 5 up and down moves. Another good exercise is to half stand then lower again or from standing begin the sitting movements then straighten again, and repeat each several times.**

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### SODOKU

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

### Across

- 1 Scented (8)
- 6 Tear (3)
- 9 Spiral (5)
- 10 Disapprove strongly of (7)
- 11 Cut short (7)
- 13 Astound (5)
- 14 Playground item (6)
- 15 Important person (4-2)
- 19 Storehouse (5)
- 21 Appalling (7)
- 22 Legacy (7)
- 23 By oneself (5)
- 24 Regret (3)
- 25 Toll road (8)

### Down

- 2 Make bigger (7)
- 3 Mend (3)
- 4 Interfere (6)
- 5 Moral corruption (9)
- 6 Spanish wine (5)
- 7 Portion (5)
- 8 Young birds (6)
- 12 Flat (9)
- 16 Poisonous plant (7)
- 17 Covering for a curtain rod (6)
- 18 Roof beam (6)
- 19 Exclude (5)
- 20 Feeling of resentment (5)
- 23 Snake (3)

### CROSSWORD

|    |   |    |  |    |  |    |  |    |    |   |    |   |
|----|---|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|----|---|----|---|
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| 24 |   |    |  | 25 |  |    |  |    |    |   |    |   |





Turn painted glass jar lids into mini wonderland scenes. Glitter the inside for a snow globe effect, then set the stage with natural excelsior grass, pipe cleaners, or cotton balls. Miniature reindeer, snowmen, or bottlebrush trees fill the scenes, highlighted by sparkly pipe cleaners glued to the rims. To hang, paint a wood bead to match the lid. Let dry. Fold a piece of thread in half, push tails through the bead, so they poke out the bottom, and hot-glue or glue bead to the top of the lid.



This gift is for the birds—literally! Simply fill a jar with bird feed and embellish the jar. Add whimsy to this simple gift by painting or stamping a bird on the jar, and top it with a ribbon and handmade tag.



Make this "snow globes" set for a friend who says her style is vintage decor. Hot-glue small figurines and bottlebrush trees to the bottoms of vintage-looking jars (we picked ours up at a crafts store). Spoon in glitter to create sparkly snow. Replace the lids and tie with jute.



Baby, it's cold outside, but these mini succulent gardens will make you think spring has arrived! To create your own terrarium:

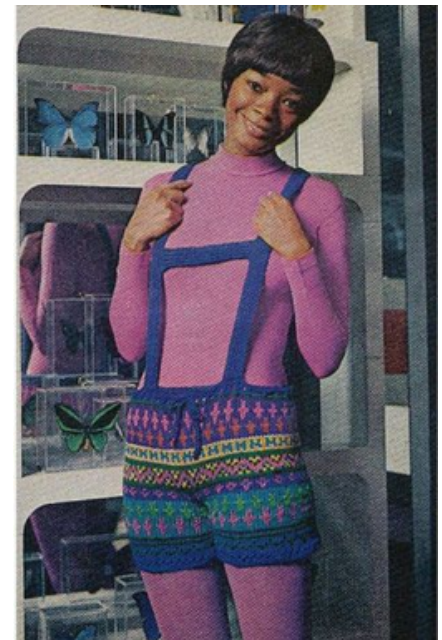
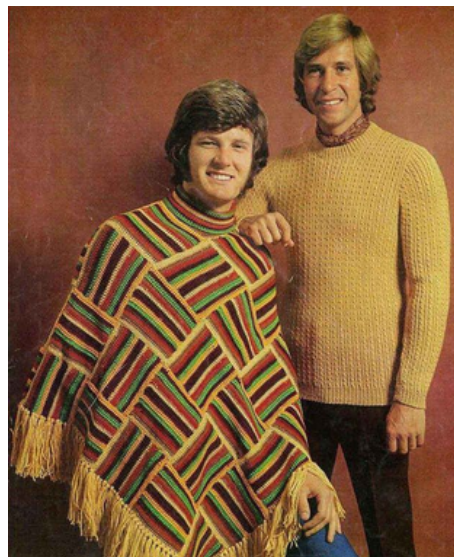
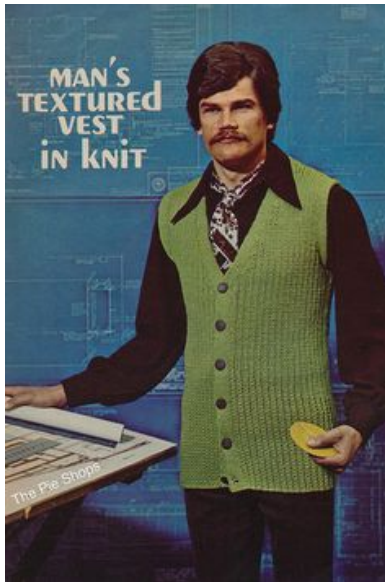
Add a layer of pebbles to the bottom of a glass jar, followed by a layer of soil.

Place your plants and add any other greenery - we like how moss gives a bit of extra dimension.

Finish the outside of the project with twine and silk leaves or flowers.



Looks like the men came off worse here!







- For advice about benefits, grants, housing and money concerns, phone our **Later Life Planning Service** on 020 8432 1417.
- For scams advice and support, call our **Scams Prevention Service** on 0208 432 2217.
- If you can't get out without help and would enjoy a regular chat with a friendly volunteer, try our **Befriending Service** on 020 8432 1416
- Unable to get out to the shops and cannot shop online? We have a **Shopping Service\*** for people who need a light weekly shop. For more info, Tel 020 8150 0963
- **Living Well Dementia Hub—dementia adviser service** and **day clubs\*** for people living with mild to moderate dementia and their carers. Phone 020 8203 5040. Our **Dementia Befriending Service** offers companionship—phone 020 8150 0967.
- Our **Stepping Out Service** for those who have early stages of dementia or confirmed memory issues, we offer short weekly walks with a volunteer. Phone 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 nailcutting with a podiatrist (£20). For an appointment, phone 020 8203 5040.
- **Advice clinics at Chipping Barnet Library** - 1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month. The Age UK Barnet advice team will be giving benefit checks, pension credit checks and winter fuel payment advice. Drop in from 10am-1pm and bookable appointments in the afternoon (you need to book during the morning drop in). To speed up process by bringing rent, service charge and bank statements. Takes place at Chipping Barnet Library, 3 Stapylton Rd, Barnet EN5 4QT
- **For essential jobs in the home** please phone our **Handyperson Service\*** on 020 8150 0963. Some jobs such as changing a lightbulb are free of charge.

\*There is a charge for this service

## OUT AND ABOUT

## AGE UK BARNET EVENTS

### Talk: Brain myths – can you believe what you read in the media? – Wednesday 13 November (6.45pm-8pm)

Neuropsychologist Professor Catherine Loveday dives into the world of brain myths and facts. From misconceptions about memory to the latest media buzz on brain training and left-brain/right-brain theories, Catherine separates fact from fiction, and tells us what science really says about how our minds work. Takes place at the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane East Finchley N2 8LT. To register, contact Teresa on 07502 989 403 or email [teresa.gallagher@ageukbarnet.org.uk](mailto:teresa.gallagher@ageukbarnet.org.uk)

### Event: Men's Health Matters - Tuesday 19 November 2024 (9.30am-12.30pm)

A morning of interesting talks and activities focusing on men's health to mark International Men's Day – expert talks and advice to give men the tools and knowledge to stay healthy and active. Venue: Watling Community Centre, 145 Orange Hill Rd, Edgware HA8 0TR. You can register for the event by emailing [salima.jiwa@ageukbarnet.org.uk](mailto:salima.jiwa@ageukbarnet.org.uk) or calling her on 07503 353157.



### Disco for over 50s – Tuesday 3 December 2024 (6-8pm)

Another chance to dust off your dancing shoes after the success of our first disco in March. Come along for a festive boogie or just sit back and enjoy your favourite tunes. Free entry and a cash bar. Takes place at the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, East Finchley N2 8LT. To register your place, contact Teresa on 07502 989 403 or email [teresa.gallagher@ageukbarnet.org.uk](mailto:teresa.gallagher@ageukbarnet.org.uk)



### Christmas concert and singalong - Monday 9 December 2024 (3.30-5pm)

Join us for a festive celebration of music and song! Enjoy a singalong and mince pies, spiced apple drink and mulled wine. Raffle and tombola. A chance to buy beautiful Christmas cards designed by our art group. Takes place at the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane N2 8LT. To register, just email [teresa.gallagher@ageukbarnet.org.uk](mailto:teresa.gallagher@ageukbarnet.org.uk) or call Teresa on 07502 989 403.



### Festive Singalong - Thursday 12 December 2024 (2.00 - 3.30pm) All welcome.

Held at St Margarets Church Edgware Social Group. St Margaret's Church, Edgware HA8 7JE. To book contact Pippa on 07379 331807.

### Afternoon tea with students at Whitefield School - Weds 18 December (2.00-4.00pm)

Music, cream tea and cakes - all free! At Whitefield School, Claremont Rd, Brent Cross, London NW2 1TR. Call Pippa on 07379 331807 or email [agefriendly@ageukbarnet.org.uk](mailto:agefriendly@ageukbarnet.org.uk)

**Writer Lee Janogly** - an 84 year old semi retired fitness instructor and author - shares the conversational highlights of her regular meet-ups with a group of good friends. After years of enjoying musical theatre, it becomes harder to tell them apart!

My friends, Pauline and Laila love musical theatre and eagerly scan the newspapers for the latest reviews. Whenever cheap same-day tickets are advertised they are off to London's theatre-land to see whatever musicals are showing. They've probably seen shows like 'Guys & Dolls', 'Chicago' and 'Les Mis' hundreds of times and never tire of the magic of live theatre.

Pauline was a professional singer and actress in her 20s. She was stunning, with the sort of cheekbones the camera loved. In films she was always cast as the 'sexy other woman' or the 'sultry barmaid', thereby ensuring she got to snog lots of famous, handsome actors – now, sadly, all dead (not her fault). Fed up with being typecast she gave up acting when she met her husband and produced four children.

At age 76 and still very attractive, Pauline decided to go back into the acting profession and joined an agency specialising in casting commercials. After being sent to audition for a stair lift, incontinence pads and the 'before' face for an anti-wrinkle cream, she gave up.

Pauline and Laila do get slightly over-excited when discussing their musicals and like to air their knowledge of songs from the shows. They have seen so many over the years that, unfortunately, as they (we) have all got – ahem, older - their recollections become a bit mixed up and the lyrics get a bit garbled: 'Oooohhhhhh-Klahoma, when the something comes sweeping over the something'.

We were gathered at my flat when they started arguing about a song called, 'Don't Wait for Me, Angelina', which Laila insisted was from Phantom of the Opera, ('is that the one with half his face in a mask?') while Pauline was certain it was from Jesus Christ Superstar ('you know, when Jesus was singing to Mary Whatsername'). When I politely pointed out it was actually called 'Don't Cry for Me, Argentina' from Evita, they glared at me.

'Well, it's by the same composers', said Laila, 'Tim Lloyd and Andrew Rice Pudding'. She's funny, my friend, Laila.

As they were the experts in the genre, it was no use pointing out that the character, Fagin didn't appear in Fiddler on the Roof, and it was Audrey Hepburn, not Barbara Streisand, who sang 'All I want is a groom somewhere' (?) in the film of My Fair Sadie (I know!).

Pauline, the consummate artiste, was still proficient on the piano and could play anything by ear, so we often gathered round my keyboard for a sing-song. As the saying goes, 'recollections may vary' as to song lyrics but we love 'I can see clearly now Lorraine has gone' – and 'The Girl from Emphysema goes walking'.

I have to finish with a Beatles song when 'I send all my luggage to you ... –

**Lee's very funny book, 'Getting Old, Deal with It' is published by Mensch Publishing.**



## WHY IT'S GOOD TO GET OLDER

ACCORDING TO A FEW OF OUR FAVOURITE CELEBRITIES



**Judi Dench:** 'The more we can be aware of what we have to celebrate, the more positive and hopeful we will feel.'

**Meryl Streep:** 'You have to embrace getting older. Life is precious, and when you've lost a lot of people, you realise each day is a gift.'

**Betty White:** 'Getting older is not something to be afraid of. It's a privilege.'

**Oprah Winfrey:** 'Getting older is the best thing that ever happened to me. I wake up every morning rejoicing that I'm still here with an opportunity to begin again and be better.'

Source: *My Weekly*



**Anger, low mood, anxiety and boredom – in a recent talk for Age UK Barnet neuropsychologist Professor Catherine Loveday's gave a science backed positive spin on negative emotions.**

- People in a lower mood perform better in tasks, and are more critical than those in a sunny mood, research has found. They spend more time on each question, try harder and get more right. We might also be less biased when we're in a lower mood. There's evidence that being in a lower mood changes the way we process information – we're more rational and logical and less influenced by what's happened before.
- Sad music can help us work through our feelings and improve our mood, although this doesn't work for everyone.
- People can sometimes hold on to more difficult memories because they help us to recognise that we survived something and that we've grown. Psychologists call these 'redemption memories'.
- Anger can be very destructive but moral anger, and the fight for justice and fairness, can be useful. Anger has driven some of the most important social changes – such as women getting the vote.
- In one study, participants who were made to feel low levels of anger were better at solving anagrams, scored better on computer games, had faster reaction times, were more likely to sign a petition, but were also more likely to cheat. Anger triggers adrenalin and higher levels of glucose in the brain – making our brains sharper and our muscles stronger.
- The body can't tell the difference between anxiety and fear. Studies show that if you can reframe and see anxiety as an energising force, you can confront your fears and lower levels of anxiety.
- Boredom can be good for us. Our minds go on a little journey when nothing is going on, flipping between things that have happened and things that might happen. Finding opportunities for your mind to wander helps make memories. 'Do something repetitive like listening to music, knitting or running – anything you love that gives you a chance to lose yourself.
- Negative emotions are the body's way of telling us something isn't quite right. They lead us to reflect on what we can do differently. Sometimes it's a case of taking time out. It might be about talking to other people or writing things down. We need to harness the creative power and energy of negative emotions but if any of the negative emotions get too much, we need to seek help.



## NEW FRIENDLY LUNCH CLUB



Join us at our Friday Lunch Club for over 55s, the ideal spot to meet new friends while savoring a delicious two-course meal. One regular raves, "The food is better than a lot of restaurants!" Another adds, "It's great to see such a welcoming mix of men and women. It makes for a lively atmosphere!"

Held every Friday at 12:45pm at the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, East Finchley, N2 8LT, the Lunch Club offers a warm, inviting space to connect and chat over a hearty

meal. Some weeks, we mix things up with a fun quiz or play a little music—though sometimes, people are just too busy chatting!

For just £8, you'll enjoy a freshly cooked, two-course meal, with vegetarian options available. To reserve your spot, reach out to Louise at 07384 466840 or email [louise.palmer@ageukbarnet.org.uk](mailto:louise.palmer@ageukbarnet.org.uk). It's a fantastic way to brighten up your Fridays!





Since retiring, our gardening columnist Kevin loves spending time in the garden and his allotment. Each issue he lets us know what he's been up to and shares a few seasonal gardening tips...

I always tell members of our allotment site that November is the start of the gardening year. This is the time to clear dead plant material, tidy beds, do any rough digging (Unless you are into 'No Dig') and add compost or manure to enrich the soil for the next growing season. If you do this now, it will give you a great start in the spring when the focus is on sowing and growing.

You can also plan where to plant the crops you want to grow, remembering to rotate them around the available area to maintain soil health and avoid the build-up of specific pests and diseases.

At our allotment site we have never had the benefit of mains electricity, so earlier in the year we had solar panels with battery storage fitted on the roof of our meeting hut. This was paid for by our ever popular plant sale and open day fund raisers. It has enabled us to improve facilities for the members and increase the use of the hut with the addition of a fridge, kettle and even LED lighting. With the limited daylight hours as we approach the shortest day of the year and the clocks having gone back, you have to make the most of the available daylight when you can. As I have said before, I think it would be a good idea if we remained on summer time all year round!

December is a quiet month in the garden, but there are things to take care of. I have moved my potted plants including agapanthus into sheltered positions to protect them from the worst of the winter weather.



In doors, protect your poinsettia plants from cold draughts and allow them to dry out slightly between watering's to help make them last into the New Year.



## A few other jobs for November / December

- Prune deciduous trees and shrubs while they are dormant. Remove any dead or diseased branches to encourage healthy growth in the spring.
- If you have houseplants, ensure they are getting proper care and rotate them for even light, but move them off particularly cold windowsills at night.
- Mulch around perennial plants to help insulate the roots.
- To help prevent slips, trips and falls, try to keep paths and driveways clear from leaves, ice, or snow.
- Finally, at Christmas, remember to eat, drink and be rosemary.



## EXTRA SUPPORT THIS WINTER



**Two organisations are there to help if you're struggling with your energy bills and staying warm**

**SHINE** offers support to people who are over 60 and are struggling financially. Arrange a consultation by phoning **SHINE on 0800 953 1221** or emailing [shine@islington.gov.uk](mailto:shine@islington.gov.uk) (covers all of London). If you are eligible, an energy doctor will visit your home and help you save money on your energy bills, check your heating controls and fit energy efficient measures such as low energy light bulbs, draft proofing, reflective radiator panels and water saving devices. They also provide energy debt support and grants and much more.

**Green Doctor** has launched its Winter Support Fund which offers energy and food support to people living in the most vulnerable situations this winter. To be eligible for energy and food support households must be on a lower income (less than £31,000) or living in an energy inefficient property. Energy and food items available include energy and supermarket vouchers and cookery or heating items such as an air fryer, heated blanket, microwave. To arrange a telephone appointment or home visit from a Green Doctor representative, phone **0300 365 3005**.



During October's Black History Month, we celebrated the incredible contributions of our African Caribbean volunteers and clients. This month, we're shining a spotlight on talented artist and former volunteer, 72-year-old Eugene Turney, who brought creativity and inspiration to our art group for over a decade.

Eugene was born in Jamaica and moved to the UK in 1960, but his passion for art started long before that. As a child, he discovered a love for drawing and painting during his art classes at school in Jamaica. When he continued his education at Bishop Wood Secondary School in Crouch End, Eugene's talent flourished, earning top grades in art. His teacher, Mr. Turner, quickly recognised Eugene's potential and encouraged him to pursue his artistic dreams.

His father was also a great supporter, urging Eugene to attend North London College on Holloway Road, where he achieved his City & Guilds Art certificate. It was here that a fellow student, recognizing Eugene's talent, gifted him his first set of oil paints and hog hair brushes - a gesture that helped launch his journey into the art world.

Eugene's creativity truly took off as he began crafting his own canvases, cutting hardboards from a local hardware store, priming them with emulsion paint, and bringing them to life with his oil paints. By the mid-1970s, Eugene earned his degree in fine art from the London Guildhall and went on to teach art at Enfield College for many years. To this day, he treasures some of the pieces he created back in the 1960s.

When Eugene joined us as a volunteer art tutor, it was a perfect match. For ten years, he shared his expertise and passion with our community, becoming a beloved tutor. His patience and kindness shone through as he guided participants who weren't sure where to start, and he made time for everyone, spreading his love for art and inspiring creativity in those around him. We feel privileged to have had Eugene as part of our team, enriching so many lives through his art and his generous spirit.



*All above paintings by Eugene Turney*

## THE BIG KNIT IS BACK!



**Every year, an army of woolly warriors take up their knitting needles and crochet hooks as part of the innocent Big Knit in partnership with Age UK.**

The Big Knit which started in 2003, encourages the country's crafters to knit little hats for the tops of innocent smoothie bottles. For every hat knitted Innocent donates 30p to help us provide much-needed services and support to older people.

Knitters and crocheters around the country will be knitting for their local Age UK and that means every hat donated to us at Age UK Barnet goes towards our work in the borough of Barnet.

Your hat dimensions should measure about 5-7cm along the bottom and at least 3cm high. Please drop off or send any hats to the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, East Finchley N2 8LT or contact Jenny for help with patterns on 020 8432 1418 who may be able to arrange for your hats to be picked up.



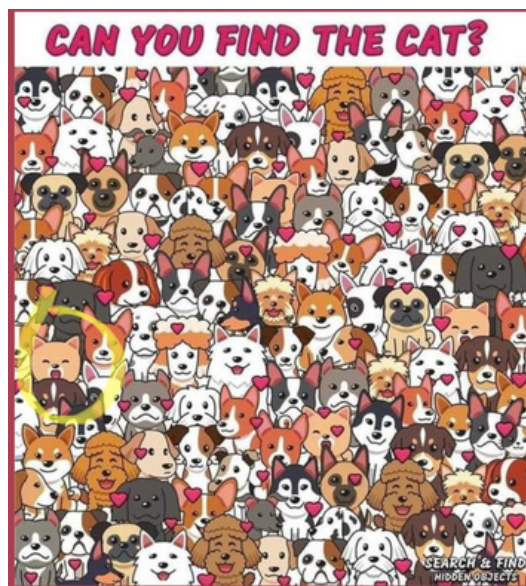
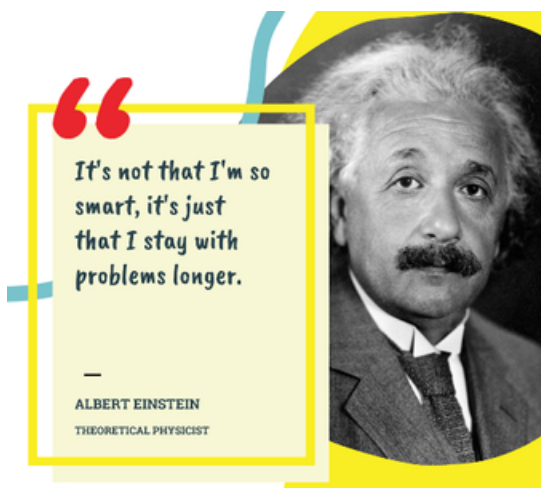
If you have enjoyed this newsletter, or have any suggestions, please let us know. Just drop us a line at Pigeon Post, Age UK Barnet, Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, East Finchley N2 8LT



"The man who says his wife can't take a joke, forgets that she took him."

OSCAR WILDE

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**Today, I realized that the word bed actually looks like a bed.**