

Welcome!



Welcome to this latest edition of our newsletter which is packed with news about Age UK Barnet. We're very proud of the wide range of activities we offer for older people and now we've got scientific evidence to prove that taking part really does improve wellbeing. Have a look at our story on page 8 about how Age UK Barnet's clients are happier than the average older person in the UK.

Why not come along to our Grandparents and Toddlers coffee morning, brush up your dancing skills at our new Bollywood class or just pop in to see us at the Ann Owens Centre to see what's on? One of our friendly reception team will be happy to chat to you about what's happening near you.

There'll be even more choices in store soon thanks to our exciting new project Barnet Connect, which is funded by the National Lottery. We'll be working with six other organisations in Barnet to reach some of the most isolated people in the borough and support them to get out and about and connected to the community.

In this issue you can also meet our new Handyperson Coordinator Becky and find out about our Quiz Night on 2 May. Give the little grey cells a whirl and join us for what promises to be a lovely evening!

Happy reading!

Helen

Helen Newman, Chief Executive
Age UK Barnet

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Register to support us today at no cost to you!

Shop with retailers including Amazon, M&S, Vodafone, eBay and Tesco via the easyfundraising website and a percentage of what you spend is passed to Age UK Barnet at no additional cost to you. Visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk

The Big Knit campaign



Thanks to Manjula for knitting 300 beautiful hats – plus to all the other purling pros who have helped knit an impressive 3000 hats so far. That's £750 once the little hats have been sold on their “innocent smoothie” bottle!

Don't put down your needles yet though – we still have another 3000 hats to go before we meet our target.

Spring Fundraiser – Quiz Night!

Whether you win or lose, quiz nights are always good fun - and a brilliant way to support the work that we do too. Our last Quiz Night in November raised over £2000 – it was a huge success thanks to all the local businesses who donated fantastic raffle prizes plus the wonderful staff and students at Hospitality House, East Finchley who rustled up a delicious supper.

So join us for our next Quiz Night on **Thursday 2 May** at the Ann Owens Centre at 6.45pm (7.15pm start). Tickets cost £15 and includes a tasty two-course meal, plus there'll be a raffle during the evening and a bar selling drinks.

Make up your own team of 8 or join another team. Places will be limited so book yours soon! All funds raised on the night go towards helping us to reduce social isolation among older people in Barnet and ensure we provide our essential services and activities.

Welcome to our new Handyperson Coordinator

Meet Becky, who's recently joined us at Age UK Barnet as the Handyperson Coordinator.

She is excited to be working for our Handyperson Service, getting to know our clients and helping them live independently for longer.

Becky has worked in both the voluntary and state sectors throughout her career, working with a variety of service users. In 2016, after having her second child, she left her job as a social worker in Kensington & Chelsea and decided to return to the charity/voluntary sector.

Becky grew up in Barnet and now lives in Enfield where she enjoys family life, yoga and reading.



Scam Prevention and Support Programme update

A big thanks to Helen Nicolaou who has been running our Scams Prevention project since January 2018. She has helped hundreds of people in Barnet, advising those who've been scammed and helping people protect themselves from fraudsters in the future. The pilot project came to an end in January, but support will continue through our Later Life Planning team as we do our best to carry on this important work.

Latest scams

Ban on pension cold calls... In a move to prevent pension scams, since January it is now illegal for a company to call you out of the blue about your pension.

If someone cold calls you about your pension, **the call is illegal** and the caller is likely to be a fraudster. You should end the call immediately and alert the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) on **0303 123 1113**

Bogus British Gas callers... After the theft of British Gas uniforms, police are asking people to be on the look-out for callers claiming to be from British Gas. Keep your door securely shut, and, if you have a door chain, please put it on.

- Be aware of cold callers. If you're not sure who is at your door, don't open it. If you believe bogus callers are trying to access your home, call the police on 999.
- Check the identity of the caller by calling the company they are claiming to be from i.e. gas, electricity, water and police.
- Use the telephone numbers listed in your local directory or provided independently by your service provider or online on their website.
- Do not use any telephone numbers provided by the caller – they may be bogus.

Further info and useful numbers

- To report a scam/fraud contact Action Fraud on **0300 123 2040**
- For consumer advice contact Barnet Citizens Advice on **0300 456 8365**
- For trading standards/rogue traders advice contact Barnet Trading Standards on **03454 04 05 06** or email trading.standards@barnet.gov.uk
- To report a crime with your local police call **101** (non-emergency number) or **999** for emergencies if you feel unsafe or threatened
- For neighbourhood policing officers contact your Safer Neighbourhood Team by going to www.met.police.uk and searching by your postcode.
- For information and advice, call Age UK Barnet on **020 8203 5040** or email reception@ageukbarnet.org.uk
- For information on Adult Abuse: Contact Social Care Direct: **020 8359 5000** (9am- 5pm, Mon to Fri), or **020 8359 2000** (out of hours) or email: socialcaredirect@barnet.gov.uk

Have you got an idea for fundraising?

Contact Wendy on **020 8432 1415** or email community@ageukbarnet.org.uk

New opportunity! Collection tin volunteers



We are on a drive to raise money for the work we do and increase awareness by placing our charity collection tins within the community. We need volunteers to contact local businesses and shops to arrange to place our tins, then collect them a few times a year.

This is a great project if you are keen to get involved but don't have huge amounts of spare time – it'll only take a few hours a week. Collection tins are an easy and convenient way to support our work and can help us raise vital funds.

To find out more about becoming a collection tin volunteer look on our website www.ageukbarnet.org.uk or contact Lisa Robbins, Volunteer Manager by email lisa.robbins@ageukbarnet.org.uk or telephone **020 8432 1422**

Volunteer Q&A

David Collins has been volunteering for Age UK Barnet's Later Life Planning Service for the past year.

Why Age UK Barnet? I am a retired solicitor and wanted to volunteer somewhere where I could use my skills and experience.

What do you do here? It's so varied – I started off helping clients with wills and probates, but now I help with people's consumer and housing issues – anything from problems with landlords, repairs and deposits to dodgy tradespeople. I also help with scams awareness – a huge fear among our clients as scammers get more sophisticated.

In fact, I'm doing all the things now I'm retired that I used to get paid for!

Biggest challenge? Age UK Barnet's database, Charitylog!

Proudest moment? I helped a recently bereaved woman who was distressed and did not know where to start with her financial affairs, which were incredibly complicated. There was no will either, making things worse, but I helped her through the process of selling her home and getting her life on track again. She would have been lost otherwise. I like a complex, gritty case to get my teeth into!

Best thing about volunteering here? I enjoy the people here – I have a huge amount of respect for Jenny and the team – Andrew, Bala and Zenda – and value their company.

What the staff say about him: He's calm, empathetic and extremely knowledgeable.



New activities

Our first ever Carol Service took place at the Church of St John the Evangelist in Friern Barnet. We all enjoyed Bible readings about the nativity, plus a very fine rendition of some Charles Dickens, interspersed with Christmas carols – old and new.

Christmas readings were given by two of our dedicated volunteers: Brenda Blackburn and Maggie Thorp; Dale Bevington - one of our hard-working Trustees; Rob Allen – a talented parishioner; the Mayor Cllr Reuben Thompstone; Rector of Friern Barnet Father Paul and our Chief Executive Helen Newman.

We were lucky enough to have the choir of St John's Primary School sing two enchanting carols for us, and the wonderfully energetic Archer Academy choir. Rob Allen and his inspirational octet performed two very moving carols and Tobi, a talented student at Woodhouse College, performed on the beautiful grand piano.

The congregation played its part too, singing five well-known carols heartily to the sounds of our very own Howard who was accompanying on the famous Father Willis organ.

Mince pies and mulled wine followed to round off an uplifting and joyful evening. Many thanks to all who contributed in any way.

Brewing Good Cheer campaign

Sixteen of our clients were treated to a tasty three-course festive feast by the Chandos Arms in Colindale as part of the Brewing Good Cheer campaign from Heineken, which encourages pubs around the UK to bring together older people in socially isolated situations and host free lunches. Thanks to Emily and Are Kolltveit and their team for a fantastic afternoon.



Foodie celebrations

We had some wonderful end-of-year parties in our cookery groups – Thursday's Wooden Spoon Club, Monday's Festive Favourites group and Thursday's men's cookery group in Mill Hill. Participants cooked a wide variety of festive offerings from traditional roast turkey with all the trimmings to salmon roulade and bacon and prune rolls, followed by apple strudel or chocolate roulade. But mainly they were warm gatherings of lovely people who have become friends while preparing some wonderful feasts together.

Fabulous festive hampers

Some little elves from Christ's College Finchley school delivered beautifully presented hampers to the Ann Owens Centre – and they were given to some of our needier clients, who were incredibly grateful for the generous donations. A big thank you to pupils, parents and staff for organising.

New activities at the Ann Owens Centre

Grandparents and Toddlers coffee morning

Our first drop in for Grandparents and Toddlers will take place on Thursday 28 March at 10am-12pm at the Ann Owens Centre, East Finchley from 10am-12pm. There'll be toys for the children, plus refreshments, and a gentle exercise class for all at 11am. Contact Howard on **020 8432 1415** for more information. First session free.

Bollywood Dancing

Pick up some traditional Bollywood moves, get fit and have fun at the same time. The new class starts on 4 March, runs every Monday evening 5.30–6.30pm and costs £3.50 a session. It takes place at the Ann Owens Centre. Contact Nila or Carolyn on **020 8629 0269** or email carolyn.ansell@ageukbarnet.org.uk

Dates for your diary!

Music and entertainment coming up at the Ann Owens Centre in 2019

Thursday ♥14 February♥ 1.30pm—Redbourne Ensemble

Thursday 14 March 1.30pm—Sandy Thompson on the violin and Irish fiddle

Tuesday 19 March 1.30pm—Whetstone Ladies' Choir

Thursday 11 April 1.30pm—George Ritchie – a talented singer who will entertain with some of your favourite songs

Thursday 2 May 6.45pm—Spring Quiz

Tuesday 14 May 1.30pm—Top Hat Tales

A musical love story based around Broadway musical songs of the 1930s, 40s and 50s performed by the Rahrah Theatre Company

All at the Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane East Finchley N2 8LT

Call Howard to book **020 8432 1415**

Cost: Afternoons £4, Quiz £15

Supporting our men's cookery

Huge thanks to Waitrose for choosing our men's beginners cookery classes for their Community Matters scheme – we were in three Barnet stores in January – and thanks if you popped a green token in our box! This money will help us set up new classes and buy more equipment. We have started two new men's beginners courses this year – one at the Ann Owens Centre, and the other at Wren Academy, where the men are being assisted by Year 11 students as part of their Duke of Edinburgh award.

Barnet Connect

We are excited to announce that AUKB have been successfully awarded £180,000 by The National Lottery Community Fund to run a brand new three-year project called Barnet Connect. With this funding, we will be recruiting, training and supporting volunteers all over Barnet to help some of the most isolated older people in our borough to get out and about and connected to the community. We aim to have the project up and running by April, so watch this space for more details...

Age UK Barnet clients happier than average older person – it's official!

Older people who have used Age UK Barnet services are nearly 15% happier than the average older person in the UK. That's according to the World Health Organisation (WHO) wellbeing index.

The wellbeing survey, devised by WHO to measure levels of mental health and wellbeing, was filled in by people who have taken part in activities and used Age UK Barnet services.

Lower scores in the WHO questionnaire have been linked with greater risk of conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and depression and can mean that people take longer to recover from illness.

Age UK Barnet clients not only scored higher than average on general wellbeing, those people who take part in one of our activities such as exercise, lunch clubs and cookery were 10% happier than our clients who don't.

And 93% who have taken our IT sessions said that they felt less lonely after one of our courses.

"Our aim is to encourage older people to increase their wellbeing and make the most of later life." says Chief Executive Helen Newman.

"Getting older doesn't come with a manual but we know that staying active and finding opportunities to connect with others are vital ingredients in the wellbeing of any older person."

"The results of the WHO survey show that the activities and services we offer are making a difference to people's lives and that the more engaged people are in our activities, the greater the benefit to their health and wellbeing."

Neil Smith – Digital Inclusion volunteer

It's time to say thank you and goodbye to Neil Smith, one of our longest serving digital inclusion volunteers, who has spent the last eight years of his retirement helping our clients get to grips with computers and technology. Neil will take with him many fond memories of his time at the Meritage Centre and the people he taught. He has always been inspired by clients who were full of life, like the 86-year-old lady learning to use a computer who was, in his words, "incredible – out in the community doing something different every day." As a volunteer, he says the biggest lesson he has learned is that "Age is a mental thing. If you think you are old, you are." We wish Neil a well-earned rest and all the best for his next adventures.

Shop online and generate a free cash donation for Age UK Barnet!

Sign up and shop online via The Giving Machine – a fundraising charity set up to help other charitable causes raise money online.

They generate a donation, at no cost to you. Visit

www.thegivingmachine.co.uk/causes/age-uk-barnet to join.

About Age UK Barnet



Age UK Barnet provides many essential activities, services and information about issues of interest to older people through its centres and in the community.

Age UK Barnet and its predecessor charitable organisations have provided services in the London Borough of Barnet for almost 50 years. It is an independent charity, affiliated to the national Age UK charity and registered with The Charities Commission.

Age UK Barnet is responsible for raising its own funds and is governed by a Board of Trustees, who are responsible for its effective running and direction.

Activities and services include:

- Later Life Planning Service
- Fitness and exercise classes
- Befriending Service
- Handyperson Service
- Computer and digital technology training and access
- Neighbourhood services such as lunch, social and interest groups

Useful contacts

Main number		020 8203 5040	info@ageukbarnet.org.uk
Activities Centre	Christine	020 8432 1423	christine.gilbert@ageukbarnet.org.uk
Wellbeing Manager	Joanne	020 8432 1421	joanne.patel@ageukbarnet.org.uk
Befriending	Sian	020 8432 1416	befriending@ageukbarnet.org.uk
Foot care	Loraine	020 8203 5040	loraine.simmons@ageukbarnet.org.uk
Computing & technology	Howard	020 8432 1415	howard.chapman@ageukbarnet.org.uk
Cookery classes	Karen	020 8150 0967	karen.williamson@ageukbarnet.org.uk
Exercise classes	Carolyn	020 8629 0629	carolyn.ansell@ageukbarnet.org.uk
Hairdressing	Loraine	020 8150 0962	loraine.simmons@ageukbarnet.org.uk
Handyperson Service	Becky	020 8150 0963	handyperson@ageukbarnet.org.uk
Later Life Planning	Andrew/Zenda	020 8432 1417	laterlifeplanners@ageukbarnet.org.uk
Nail cutting	Linda	020 8203 5040	info@ageukbarnet.org.uk
Scams Prevention	Helen	020 8432 1419	scamsawareness@ageukbarnet.org.uk
Social groups	Howard	020 8432 1415	howard.chapman@ageukbarnet.org.uk
Volunteers	Lisa	020 8432 1422	lisa.robbs@ageukbarnet.org.uk

Age UK Barnet, Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, East Finchley N2 8LT

Email: info@ageukbarnet.org.uk

Call: **020 8203 5040**

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