

londonage

Age UK London Magazine • Winter 2015



Music in hospitals

Find out about a different kind of care

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'Tell Me!' campaign**

Comment



Samantha Mauger
Chief Executive
Age UK London

Welcome to the latest edition of London Age! I trust you have all had a good start to 2015!

We are delighted to be telling you about our latest campaign, 'Tell Me!' in these pages; older Londoners' access to public information is an issue that older people, and Age UK London, feel strongly about and our campaign aims to make sure something is done about it.

We also have articles from Music in Hospitals, a fantastic organisation who bring live music to people in care, and London Councils about the renewal of the Freedom Pass and a brand new website.

Donnachadh McCarthy, a renowned author and expert on eco-issues, recently carried out an eco-audit of Age UK London, and we are thrilled that he has agreed to write a series of articles with advice for you – the first one is included here.

Age UK London want to be accountable and measureable, so you can read a summary of our 2013/14 Impact Report – we worked with 409 organisations and thousands of older people in that time, something we celebrate.

Please visit our website and follow us on twitter to keep up to date with news on a more regular basis but, for now, enjoy the magazine!

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Top news

Fit 4 Purpose scores!

Age UK London's Fit 4 Purpose programme, funded by London Councils, has been given a 99% RAG rating by the London Councils monitoring team – an achievement that we're extremely proud of. Kathleen Egan, Programmes Manager at Age UK London, said: 'The excellent rating has come about due to the hard work, depth of knowledge, skill and passion of the Age UK London staff team. We're delighted to be recognised in this way and hope to continue next year! London Councils have decided to fund Fit 4 Purpose for another year, which will be the programme's third, from April 2015 to March 2016.'



TfL

Transport for London (TfL) are currently recruiting for new members to join our Independent Disability Advisory Group (IDAG). The role of the IDAG is to review key policies including TfL's business plan and flagship projects, as well as recommend guiding principles to ensure that we succeed in promoting equality for disabled people in London. The IDAG hold five Sub-Regional Mobility forums twice a year which are chaired by an Advisory Member. Find out more and obtain an application pack, people by contacting TfL on idadag@tfl.gov.uk or by phoning **020 3054 7165**.

Barnet's cookery classes

Gerald Haines, Syd McGowan and Michael Moody from Age UK Barnet's men's cookery classes featured as home cooks, during the debut week of ITV's new cookery-come-chat show, Mel and Sue. This is Mel Giedroyc and Sue Perkins' first chat show in over 16 years which started on ITV, this month. Gerald, Syd and Michael cooked chicken casserole and dumplings for Mel and Sue and their guests. Find out more about this and watch the episode by visiting www.ageuk.org.uk/barnet



Know Your Rights campaign

The Mayor's of London's annual Know Your Rights campaign aims to help to reduce the number of older Londoners living in poverty. This year the focus is on raising awareness of Pension Credit and other extra income among eligible older people to help them claim what they deserve. Age UK London is a partner in the campaign which runs from January 2015 to 30 April 2015. Throughout the campaign fourteen local Age UKs in London will be holding awareness raising events. Campaign leaflets will be available and posters will be displayed at various locations around London including some local Age UKs, libraries, community centres, carers centres and GP surgeries

Find out more by visiting www.ageuk.org.uk/london

Freedom Pass renewals

Julian Bell, Chair of London Councils' Transport and Environment Committee, tells us about how you can renew your freedom pass and the new Freedom Pass website.

A recent report by elderly people's helpline, Silver Line, found that a majority of calls it received during its first year of operation were about loneliness.

This winter, London Councils will invite around 860,000 older person's pass holders to renew their Freedom Pass. Freedom Pass is an important free service for more than a million older people across London and passes are used to make many thousands of journeys every day to visit family, shop or attend to business.

A paper form is available in most areas, but pass holders are being encouraged to renew online and a new website has been launched to make the process quicker and easier.

Research by Ofcom shows 42 per cent of people aged 65 and older use the internet, a rise of 27 per cent between 2012 and 2013.

London Councils is telling older people's pass holders to look out for the letter they will receive and help renew the easiest way – by going online.

Freedom Pass is run by London Councils on behalf of the 32 London boroughs and the City of London, with support from the Mayor of London, to give older and disabled Londoners free travel on all London buses, the Tube, London Overground, DLR, most local rail services and London's Tram network.

Pass holders are entitled to free or discounted trips on London river services and non-TFL bus routes, as well as savings on the Emirates Air Line cable car and other transport services across the country.

Earlier this year London Councils conducted telephone polling of all pass holders who called the Freedom Pass helpline, which found 50 per cent were intending to or were interested in renewing online. To ensure the site was as clear and easy to use as possible, London Councils carried out extensive user testing with Freedom Pass holders and used their feedback to further improve the site.

Pass holders will still be able to renew with a paper form in most cases and can get assistance at their local library in most boroughs. We recommend pass holders contact their local library first to find out if assistance is available.

In the first full week of the renewal process in November, nearly 80 per cent of renewals were made online through the Freedom Pass portal.

All pass holders who need to renew should have received letters by the end of the month. They then have until January 31 to renew in order to ensure they receive their new pass by March 31 2015, when their existing pass will expire.

For more information, visit the new Freedom Pass website at www.freedompass.org.uk



FreedomPass

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**Keeping in touch
is always better
in person.**



**IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR
OLDER PERSONS FREEDOM PASS?**



If your older persons Freedom Pass expires in March 2015 you need to renew it. To continue to enjoy free travel all over London visit www.freedompass.org

THE FREEDOM PASS · STAY CONNECTED

Freedom Pass is paid for by your local council

FEATURE

Music memories: the importance of live music for elderly people in care

Marianne Bergesen, Fundraising Manager for Music in Hospitals, talks about the charity and the importance of bringing live music to people in care and especially for elderly people, who can often feel isolated, lonely and in need of a break in their routine.



Music in Hospitals (MiH) has been bringing the joy and therapeutic benefits of live music to people in care for over 65 years. A registered charity and a leading provider of professionally performed live music across the healthcare spectrum, the overall aim of MiH is to improve the quality of life in care for sick and disabled people through our live music projects.

Marianne Bergesen says: "It is extraordinary to see our musicians at work and how they transform the mood in a room with their uplifting music. Elderly people who have been sitting slumped in

chairs will suddenly start to clap their hands, tap their feet and sing along to a well known tune and the musicians will invariably encourage audience participation and try to engage and involve everyone. Our live music sessions bring people together, allowing those being cared for to enjoy a therapeutic and fun activity with staff and/or family members around them."

MiH was established in 1948, following the closure of the Entertainments National Services Association (ENSA), initially to provide concerts to aid the recuperation of injured WWII soldiers.

Over the years we have continuously expanded our work in response to advancements in healthcare provision. Today we provide live music performances in hospitals, hospices, care homes, day centres, special schools and for clubs provided services for people with disabilities or vulnerable older adults. We work across the whole of England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Channel Islands and Scotland, each year organising in the region of 3,500 performances.

Today we provide live music performances in hospitals, hospices, care homes, day centres, special schools and for clubs provided services for people with disabilities or vulnerable older adults.

Music is performed by soloists or small ensembles of professional musicians, who represent a variety of different musical disciplines and cultures. Programmes range from light classical to opera, folk music to jazz, stage musicals to rock 'n' roll, and each session is tailored to meet the needs of the group and setting. A typical MiH music performance lasts for around an hour, but it is not only about good quality music. All of our musicians are selected by audition and we seek those with exceptional communication skills as well as outstanding musical ability. Our musicians engage with audience members and staff on a human level, bringing warmth, gentleness, understanding and humour to their performances.

All of our musicians are selected by audition and we seek those with exceptional communication skills as well as outstanding musical ability.

MiH's work with elderly people in care and also Dementia and Alzheimer's sufferers

Our live music programmes for elderly people is a particularly busy and important area of our charity's work. The demand for live music is very high and the audience very appreciative

of a diversion in their daily life and routine. Our many years of experience have shown, and more recent academic research has substantiated, that engaging in live music activities can enhance well-being, reduce levels of stress, increase self esteem and improve quality of life, both for those being cared for and for staff and family members. Maintaining good physical and mental health is a significant concern for adults and children in care and is the key to good quality of life. However; for some for example older people, makes it harder to maintain contact with existing friends and relatives, particularly if they do not live at home anymore.

Music is used with older people to increase or maintain their level of physical, mental, and social/emotional functioning. The sensory and intellectual stimulation of music can help maintain a person's quality of life. A report from Help the Aged states that; "almost 50% of care home residents' time is spent asleep, socially withdrawn or inactive, with only 3% spent on constructive activity."

The music has a calming and reassuring effect

MiH has a particular interest in elderly people with dementia and how music can have a calming effect on behaviour and wellbeing and can evoke distant feelings and memories buried deep inside. We have collaborated with Dr Nigel Marshall of Sussex University with his study in this area and his findings have shown the importance live music plays for elderly with dementia and the recollection of old songs often comes about when other memories have been lost. Dr Marshall observed; 'The music has a calming and reassuring effect for example, we have noted a greater number of attachment behaviours during musical elements and before and after but a significant decrease during the actual musical items. For some patients with severe physical issues, the music is the only event they can take part in – fully!'



Some lovely quotations from care homes which Music in Hospitals visit on a regular basis:

'Such a worthwhile cause, residents loved the music and to see them interact as they did was heartwarming. It is very difficult to motivate elderly people, but this music session clearly did. Thank you.' Dalling House, Crowborough. (about the Caledon Singers) MiH concert rated Excellent. 07/08/2013

'Music in hospitals was/is fabulous. We were very grateful for the entertainment.'

Margaret House Extra Care Scheme, Uckfield. (about A Couple of Swells) MiH concert rated Excellent. 15/10/2013

To find out about how you could benefit and to enquire about MiH live music programmes - please contact us on **01932 260810** or **info@musicinhospitals.org.uk**.

Eco-Friendly elderly

Donnachadh McCarthy FRSA, from 3 Acorns Eco-Audits, recently gave Age UK London an 'eco-audit'. He was so helpful to us as an organisation that we asked him to write for London Age and here he gives us the first in a four part series on how older people can be eco-friendly.



Being eco-friendly can be good for older people's health and can save hundreds of pounds. Over 80% of elderly people need more exercise. Doctors recommend at least 30 minutes exercise, five times a week for over 65s.

One easy way is to cycle to local shops or library. Regular cycling can add three years to our lives and helps reduce illnesses including heart disease, diabetes, dementia and depression. Most London Councils have training schemes on how to cycle safely. Just call them or check their website. Cheap refurbished bikes can be purchased from Re:Cycling, 110 Elephant Road, SE1 www.re-cycling.co.uk

Being efficient with heating, electricity, water and food will cut your costs. Turning the heating down to frost protection in unused rooms and closing their doors, will reduce the space you are heating. If you do not close the doors, you will wastefully pay for the heat from the rest of the building to warm these rooms. If you have a water meter,

Thames Water provides free water-efficient gadgets to reduce bills. Aerating shower-heads mix air-bubbles into the water-bubbles, reducing costs by nearly a third. If you do not have a water meter and it is just yourself or a partner living at home, you could save hundreds of pounds with a free water meter from Thames Water.

Being eco-friendly helps leave a better world for our grandkids. Wasteful lifestyles are threatening our grand-kids' future economic and physical health. The oceans are 30% more acidic than prior to the industrial revolution, putting entire fish stocks at risk. We have lost an alarming 50% of all wild animal, fish and bird populations over the last 45 years. At this rate there will be none left within our children's lifetimes. US Government scientists believe the Antarctic Ice-cap may be melting irreversibly, which would put a future London under water.

Being efficient helps reduce the pressure on the planet and is good for our pockets. So why not implement these easy tips today?!

Eco Cost-Cutting Tips

- 1 Free advice on Energy Saving grants available for the elderly, where you live: **0300 123 1234**
- 2 Free water saving devices: www.thameswater.co.uk/save-water/9692.htm **0800 316 9800**
- 3 Turn heating to frost-protection in unused rooms and close their doors. Air occasionally.



Welfare reform

Ben Donovan, Research Officer, Age UK London, tells us about his findings in his report, for Positive Ageing in London and Age UK London, about how welfare reform has affected older people in London.

Positive Ageing in London (PAiL) and Age UK London work independently and in collaboration to raise awareness of issues affecting older Londoners. This research paper represented a joint effort to enhance understanding of the impact of welfare reform on older Londoners.

Whilst much has been printed about the extent to which those above SPA are 'protected' from welfare reform, this paper sought to investigate and challenge this idea whilst also looking into the effect of changes on that under-emphasised group of 'younger-old' Londoners who are below SPA but over the age of 50. Ultimately, the purpose of the research is to draw out greater understanding of the circumstances that increase the likelihood of older Londoners being adversely impacted upon by the changes.

This paper forms a part of a broader research project using data collected from across the capital but has a specific focus on the case-study interviews that were conducted in this project. Case-study recruitment methods were inspired by a consultative discussion with UKAFA (UK Advisory Forum on Ageing) and those interviewed voluntarily indicated their interest and, provided they met certain screening criteria, were all interviewed between the months of May and July, 2014.

The research highlighted a number of key issues that would be worth investigating further and addressing that have particular poignancy for

older Londoners. Firstly, the incentivising to work is counteracted against by other barriers affecting job-seekers aged 50+. Secondly, knock-on effects from benefits-changes that people above SPA are exempt to are illustrated to show how this exemption does not necessarily protect from impact. Thirdly, along with language, computer-literacy and disability are highlighted as issues that can be particularly prone to causing difficulties for older Londoners negotiating welfare-reform.

Case-study evidence is indicative that there certainly are cases where welfare reform has resulted in decreased satisfaction with certain areas of living temporarily or for the longer term whilst also providing some insight into how the impact of welfare reform changes have impacted upon people's lives at a broader level. Similarly, by focusing on those who have been adversely affected (and it was the case that those were the people who volunteered participation rather than those, if they exist, who may feel they had been affected positively by changes) there are indications for improvements within the system.

In more than one instance, it can be seen that the efforts to incentivise or promote certain behaviours are resisted against by other barriers that may particularly affect certain people. Linda, for instance, hardly needs the extra incentivising to find work that the benefits changes have been intended to promote but it is one thing to try to encourage people to find work, and another thing to ensure that there really are jobs out there and employers who are willing to take on board





someone with an extensive CV but no recent qualifications and who might be approaching SPA. Similarly, it is one thing to incentivise down-sizing by bringing in under-occupancy penalties, but, without the available housing in areas that are genuinely attractive to individuals for whatever reason, people like Tom risk feeling squeezed by the pressure to move and the barrier of insufficient suitable housing.

The stresses experienced by those without English as a first language or with a disability have also been evidenced in these case-studies. Both Nisha and Tom could have been at risk of losing their homes if it weren't for their pro-activity in finding, and availability of, local advice services to support them. Computer-illiteracy, language problems and disability can affect an individual's ability to locate and make use of necessary support and, certainly in these cases, the sign-posting for this support was not clear.

As Nisha discovered, systems of resolving difficulties through the changes, though effective, don't always take into account the problems people can face while the resolution is taking place. In the 11 weeks it took for the error with

Nisha's payments to be resolved, she had been living on a decreased sum that impacted upon her ability to buy food and pay for basic utilities. Another unpublished case-study also emphasised this in the case of an individual who didn't know he was eligible for hardship fund support and nearly lost his residence as a result. This also links into the sign-posting and availability of information alluded to in the previous paragraph.

Finally, there are likely to be other unforeseen 'knock-on' effects such as that experienced by Judith. Being exempted financially does not mean that one is exempted from impact. Older people, possibly more than many, rely on networks, families and friends for assistance with many support needs of an entirely non-financial nature and, with isolation amongst older people a prominent issue in the literature, some form of consideration and ameliorative element would seem to be of value in shielding them from any effects that might serve to inadvertently sever these crucial networks.

You can read the full report by visiting the Positive Ageing in London website www.pailondon.org.uk

Tell me!

Age UK London's latest campaign, 'Tell Me!', aims to bring better access to public information for older people



The planning for Age UK London's latest campaign, 'Tell Me!', about improving information to older people from local authorities and the NHS, began early last year!

The annual 'Your Priorities' survey, where we ask older people in London what they think we should be campaigning on in the year ahead, had access to public information and digital inclusion as the top two areas we could work in. This campaign fuses those two policy areas, while we also want to ensure that face-to-face and hard-copy information is also available and accessible.

In December, we developed a short survey for older people to fill in, hoping to find out more about their thoughts on this issue. We asked questions on their experiences of getting information relating to health, public transport, planning, housing, parking & roads, leisure & recreation, lifelong learning & education and social care & benefits. We also invited public bodies to fill in a separate survey, so we could capture their perspective.

We are currently compiling and collating the data

we found, and will be drafting a research report based on it.

As part of the campaign, Age UK London will be holding a range of 'Information Scavenger Hunts' to find out how older people in London are really able to access the information they need. These scavenger hunts will consist of older people trying to find public information online, on the phone and in person. We are currently expecting to run at least five.

The results of these scavenger hunts will then help Age UK London get a picture of how easy it is to access this information online, what could be improved and who is leading the way in making information available online. Willing participants can also take part in telephone scavenger hunts and 'real life' scavenger hunts! All of this information will also form part of the report. On 21 May we will be launching the report; information will be available closer to the time, but please check the Age UK London website and Twitter account for more information.

One of the biggest aims of this campaign is to get local public bodies to host their own 'Information Open Days' for older people, and we will be encouraging them to do so as soon possible. One local borough has already hosted one, and it was very successful; older people were able to ask questions and explore the website in an environment where help was on hand.

For more information about this campaign, please contact Gordon Deuchars on GDeuchars@ageuklondon.org.uk or call **020 7820 6777**.

Age UK London impact report

Age UK London's Impact Report for 2013/14 outlined the successes of the organisation over the period and celebrated the impact upon older people in London. We wanted to give you a taste of what we had to share...



Age UK London works to raise the voice and address the needs and aspirations of older Londoners. We do this by having older people at the heart of all we do.

Our work is framed within a number of principles that reflect our approach to the importance of older people in all our lives. We believe that we should practice respect, inclusion and transparency at all times and in all our activities and that we never underestimate what older Londoners can achieve. We want to ensure that our older community can see the value of what we do and feel enabled to be part of it through our openness and inclusion. To achieve this, we regularly ask older people what we should focus on in our campaigning and engagement work to ensure our priorities meet their needs. A key focus last year was digital inclusion, both in terms of

access to online services, but also respecting those for whom digital access was not a priority or even an option. This will remain a key part of our work moving forward.

We want to ensure that older Londoners' perspectives are demonstrably at the heart of all we do and that our work is based on hard evidence. We want to challenge stereotyping and raise the profile of older people in London. One of our 2012 'Supporting Older People's Contribution to London' campaign asks was to request that the GLA undertake some research on the economic contribution of older people in London. The GLA undertook this extremely valuable piece of work which shows that older people add £47 billion to the London economy through paid work alone (18% of the total) and 85,000 families in London receive childcare from grandparents year on year.

We want to challenge stereotyping and raise the profile of older people in London.

Turning the spotlight on ourselves, we also want to be sure that Age UK London has older Londoners best interests at the centre of our work. Our Fit 4 Purpose programme works with 409 older people's organisations in London with the aim of maximising voice and sustainability; the London Minority Ethnic Elders Forum, working with older people from 115 organisations, had a key focus on health and social care; and Positive Ageing in London, (the London Regional Forum on Ageing) has challenged the common narrative relating to older people.



The engagement work of Age UK London is very important to us. We feel being able to act as the conduit for the grass roots thoughts and views of older people across London and being able to take these to policy makers and influencers across the Capital is central to our work. Services and opportunities are best shaped by those people who are directly affected by them, and we will continue to act to get local experience on the regional agenda. In July 2014 Age UK London hosted a lively and dynamic event focusing on the Mayoral contribution to older Londoners reflecting back over the past two and half years and focusing on what had been achieved since that time.

Services and opportunities are best shaped by those people who are directly affected by them,

and we will continue to act to get local experience on the regional agenda.

Healthwatch City of London continues to be a valuable opportunity for us in being the health and social care champion for the community that is resident in the City of London. The Business Directory, which aims to secure tradespeople in London boroughs that have had references and trades qualifications verified, now works across 15 boroughs with the aim of expanding London-wide in the following period. Age UK London Trading Company continues to offer a range products and services for the over 50s and generated over £365,000 in grants for local Age UKs in London.

This last year has had its funding challenges in common with many charities across London,



however the charity has continued to add value and impact in all of its work with older Londoners across the capital and we look forward to expanding our work in the year ahead.

One of our key programmes, Fit 4 Purpose funded by London Councils, made a significant impact. Here are some key stats:

Fit 4 Purpose has reached a large number of organisations working with older people, as well as many individuals. Since it began...

Organisations

409 organisations working with older people have been reached, either through 121 support, attending workshops or being matched with one of the project workers or social media volunteers

Briefings

More than 587 organisations have received at least one of our briefings; there are nine quarterly briefings in total.

Opinion Exchange & Knowledge Hub

3356 individuals have engaged with the Age UK London Opinion Exchange and Knowledge Hub

Workshops

395 occasions an organisation has had an individual attend a Fit 4 Purpose workshop

Boroughs

All 33 London boroughs have been reached by the Fit 4 Purpose project

Commendation

98% RAG rating was given by London Councils for an evaluation of our delivery against targets in 2013-14

You can read the whole of Age UK London's Impact Report 2013-14 on the website by visiting www.ageuk.org.uk/london

IN THE HOTSEAT

Q&A Sharon Tynan, Fit 4 Purpose Development Worker and PAiL Co-ordinator shares her thoughts on working with older people

How do you come to be working for Age UK?

I have worked and volunteered in the voluntary and community sector at a national and local level for almost twenty years and joined Age UK London in the Autumn of 2011. My first role involved setting up the corporate volunteering element of an intergenerational digital inclusion programme called MiCommunity, involving 32 boroughs of Greater London and over 1000 volunteers.

Why are older people's issues important to you?

As we are living in an ageing society I believe that it's important to raise the issues and address the needs of all members of our society especially those that don't get the opportunity to. I enjoy working and campaigning on behalf of older Londoners and promoting and protecting the rights of older people - after all I'm going to be an older Londoner myself very soon!

What projects do you run?

I run a series of workshops for older people's groups and organisations through our London Councils funded Fit 4 Purpose programme. These

workshops help the groups and organisations through a variety of workshops - Introduction to Social Media, Free Resources Online and Digital Democracy are just a few! I also run Techy Tea Parties which is a fantastic legacy from the MiCommunity programme.

What are the biggest concerns you hear from older people?

The fear of being left behind both digitally and socially.

What has been your best experience working with older people?

We started the idea of Techy Tea Parties here at Age UK London, where we bring older people into corporate premises and the staff volunteer to show their guests how to send a text message or attach a file to an email or how to use a tablet. Learner led 1:1 support is key and really builds confidence which is what the main barrier to most things are.

What is your vision for your work at Age UK London?

To keep working and campaigning for and on behalf of older people so that no one is left behind and that wider society respects the knowledge and experience held in older people's minds.

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ISSN: 1357-1109

London Age highlights issues which affect older people in the capital. It is produced to support Age UK London's mission to improve the quality of life for older Londoners and to enhance their status and influence.

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Age UK London works across the capital to improve the quality of life for older people and to enhance their status and influence.

If you have any comment on the magazine content or ideas for the next issue, we'd love to hear from you: delliott@ageuklondon.org.uk

Charity registration number 1092198.
Company registration number 4407861.

Age UK London receives funding from London's local councils.

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Tavis House, 1-6 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9NA. ID200457 03/12

MP2210V3MAR12 KE054923_13