

## Age UK Redbridge, Barking & Havering Fortnightly Newsletter

**Welcome to the new Age UK Redbridge, Barking and Havering (RBH) newsletter.**

In recent months, we have all experienced unforeseen and radical changes in the way we live our lives. We understand that this has been a particularly difficult time for many amongst our members at Age UK RBH and have been working hard to offer you practical and social support during this period. We are very pleased, therefore, to have this opportunity to write to you to provide an overview of our recent work as well as to make you aware of how our services have expanded and changed. Most importantly, we hope that this update will enable you to identify how Age UK RBH can benefit you directly. Finally, we remind all our members and local residents over 50 that we are always here to support you in older age.

**We are contactable via our office number: 020 8220 6000 or via email: [admin@ageukrbh.org.uk](mailto:admin@ageukrbh.org.uk)**

**You can find out more about our services at:**

**[www.ageuk.org.uk/redbridgebarkinghavering/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/redbridgebarkinghavering/)**

### **REDBRIDGE COVID 19 SHOPPING AND PRESCRIPTION COLLECTION SERVICE**

Since the beginning of the lockdown due to Covid 19, Age UK RBH has set up a shopping and medicine collection service in Redbridge for those who are shielding.

This has been a huge success, both with the people we are supporting as well as the

volunteers. To date we have recruited 60 volunteers to support 150 older people who cannot get out to shop.

We would like to say a huge thank you to all those who have volunteered with this service - your work has been invaluable.



### **WELFARE CHECKS**

Since the 23rd March all of our services have been keeping in touch with our members via phone, and online. We have been conducting Covid Welfare checks for our members, ensuring that they are well and have all the provisions they need. We have worked closely with local organisations and made appropriate referrals. To date we have conducted 1802 welfare checks for our members.

## A POSITIVE POINT OF VIEW

It can feel lately, like there is never anything positive to read about in the news. Here at Age UK RBH we want to focus on the positives that have come out of this time.

Some have enjoyed a slower pace of life or the opportunity to connect more deeply with those in their household. Communities have come together to help each other out, sharing skills and resources to make sure no one goes without.

Many have learned new skills - here at Age UK RBH lots of our members have been empowered with IT skills that have opened up new opportunities.

What good things have you experienced during lockdown?

For a wealth of uplifting news stories, you can visit:

[karunavirus.org](http://karunavirus.org)

## DI'S DIAMONDS AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Over the lockdown period, Di's Diamonds have been continuing our activities Remotely, both online and via the telephone.

We have a private Facebook group where we share updates, reminiscence posts and jokes to keep each others' spirits up. We host weekly 'watch parties' - members put in their song requests throughout the week and come together online to watch and enjoy the music and videos.



Our weekly Zoom coffee mornings take place on Thursdays at 11am and have been a great way for members, both old and new to keep in touch.

Members without internet can dial into the coffee mornings using their house or mobile phones. We have also set up a buddy system to connect members by phone.

We are also able to offer you support with the technology to access any of our activities.

In recent weeks Di's Diamonds

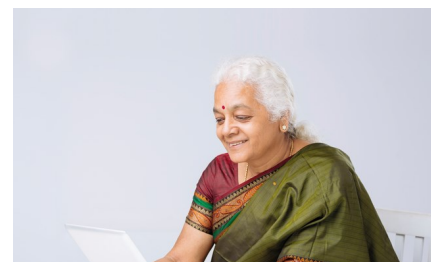
have been working with Create to offer a series of poetry workshops run by professional poet and writer Simon Mole. Participants had the opportunity to write and develop their own poems. At the end of the 8 weeks, participants selected one of their poems to be included in a printed collection of their work.

The next set of Create workshops focuses on photography and will start on 8th September.

Our Facebook group and all of our online activities can be accessed just as soon as you've signed up with Di's Diamonds. The service is free to join and is open to anyone—both men and women—aged 50+ in Redbridge, Barking & Dagenham and Havering. To find out more or to register with us please email:

[disdiamonds@ageukrbh.org.uk](mailto:disdiamonds@ageukrbh.org.uk)

Or telephone: 07494035950 (Redbridge, Barking & Dagenham); 07375 704448 (Havering)



## MAKING IN ISOLATION— A REMOTE ART PROJECT IN COLLABORATION WITH SPACE, ILFORD

Age UK RBH have been collaborating with SPACE in Ilford to offer Redbridge residents the opportunity to take part in two series of workshops led remotely by a professional artist to create collaborative pieces of art. The participants were sent all the materials in the post, along with instructions for each of the 5 weeks. They dialled into a conference call each week to update on their progress, resolve any practical issues and explore a different topic of conversation guided by the artist—from experiences of solidarity to memories of old clothes.

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*“for me it was a good 5 weeks of therapy getting my attention and focus away from Covid anxiety. It revived my creative energy and ...helped me to take things a day at a time”*  
- Khim Lee, Age UK RBH volunteer and participant in Making in Isolation project

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The first set of workshops, led by Nicole Morris focused on creating a collaborative batik, with the participants drawing and swapping patterns. In the second run of workshops, led by Lara

Hailey, participants made individual embroidery and appliqué pieces, inspired by objects around their homes and gardens, that will be sewn together to form a collective fabric piece.



*Pictured left  
—participants' finished  
batik pieces*

## RELAX AND CREATE WATERCOLOUR SESSIONS WITH ARTIST BRENDA COYLE



*Image copyright: Brenda Coyle*

The Di's Diamonds Service are working with artist Brenda Coyle to offer accessible watercolour sessions delivered both online via Zoom as well as through a newsletter full of arty inspiration and ideas. The Zoom sessions take place every other Tuesday morning at 10.30-12.30.

The sessions are very informal and fun and Brenda welcomes participants who prefer to join just for a chat and to watch.

All you need to join in are some watercolour paints, a jar of water, a brush and some paper. If you don't have watercolours, you can use coloured pencils, felt tips or anything else you have to hand.

To join Di's Diamonds or to sign up to Brenda's sessions or newsletter please email:

[disdiamonds@ageukrbh.org.uk](mailto:disdiamonds@ageukrbh.org.uk)

Or telephone: 07494035950



## FALLS PREVENTION SERVICE

The Falls Prevention Service have maintained weekly telephone contact with our service users since the start of lockdown and welfare checks have been conducted for all users. Since June we have been holding our weekly Tai Chi session on Zoom which has been very successful with an average of 10 attendees. We have also sent all our service users the Public Health Exercise booklet to follow some exercise routines in their homes. Rama, our exercise tutor has used Whatsapp to provide both 1-1 and group exercise sessions. She is now looking to provide weekly chair based exercise sessions via Zoom.

The service in Redbridge has also organised a couple of socially distanced in-person meet-ups in Valentine's Park to touch base with members and make plans for going forward.

For Falls Prevention information in Redbridge area please contact Jasbir Jheeta: [jasbir.jheeta@ageukrbh.org.uk](mailto:jasbir.jheeta@ageukrbh.org.uk)  
For Havering, Barking & Dagenham please contact Lorraine Barfoot: [lorraine.barfoot@ageukrbh.org.uk](mailto:lorraine.barfoot@ageukrbh.org.uk)  
Or phone the Age UK RBH office on 020 8220 6000

### Local Resources

#### and Contacts

#### Mental Health Support

Havering -

[www.haveringmind.org.uk](http://www.haveringmind.org.uk)

01708 457040

Barking and Dagenham and Redbridge -

[www.nelft.nhs.uk/home](http://www.nelft.nhs.uk/home)

0300 555 1000

#### Covid 19 Local Advice and

#### Information

Havering -

[www.havering.gov.uk/covid19](http://www.havering.gov.uk/covid19)

0800 368 5201

Barking & Dagenham -

[www.lbbd.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19)

020 8215 3000

Redbridge -

[www.redbridge.gov.uk/coronavirus-information-hub](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/coronavirus-information-hub)

0808 196 3646

## Voices of Experience User Involvement Project

The Age UK RBH User Involvement Project in Redbridge is a means of engaging with older people to get their views on services that affect their lives. During the pandemic we have involved members in the campaign about suspending peak travel for freedom pass holders and a London borough of Redbridge trial of an online financial needs questionnaire.

If you would like the opportunity to express your views via the User Involvement Project please contact Janet West on: [janet.west@ageukrbh.org.uk](mailto:janet.west@ageukrbh.org.uk)

