

Age UK Redbridge, Barking & Havering

As we welcome in a New Year, the news that London has gone from relaxed Christmas restrictions since the last newsletter, to Tier 4, to once again a lockdown. This has most likely been very distressing news for everyone, but at least the Covid-19 vaccine has given us all hope. The vaccine has already started to be rolled out across the country and those who are most vulnerable will be getting their vaccines first.

Many of our clients will have already had their vaccine or have an appointment to get it, and others will shortly follow. During the pandemic, staff members as well as volunteers have been helping out with befriending phone calls assisting the Forget me Not befriending Service. Pat our User Involvement Service Coordinator has been phoning 88 year old Grace, here's what happened when Grace got her vaccine:

Gracie – 88 years old, Angina and Arthritis –

“Gracie is a member of our Forget Me Not Service. I have been phoning her over the past six or so months during the COVID pandemic. We always have a great chat.

When I phoned Gracie after the New Year, we had lots of holiday information to catch up on. Gracie had been well looked after by her neighbours, which was great. But she also told me that she had her COVID vaccination on the previous Saturday – 2nd January 2021. She couldn't have been more positive about the experience.

She had been phoned on the previous Friday, that's New Year's Day! The person who phoned said they were phoning on behalf of her surgery. They wanted her to

attend Hawkey Hall in Chigwell at 12:30pm on the next day - Saturday.

Gracie drove there and got a parking space that was very convenient, which she thought was fortunate. She is hard of hearing and was wearing a face mask, so she wrote down on a piece of paper her name, date of birth and the time of her appointment. She thinks the people helping her were volunteers. She was then passed onto two men with hand sanitiser, which they sprayed on her.

She was directed to a large hall with chairs that were spaced out. She was given a raffle ticket with a number on it and asked to wait. When her number was called, she went into one of the 12 cubicles where a nurse took down her details. She said a doctor then came in to give her the Pfizer injection.

She was asked to wait in another area for 15 minutes. She didn't have a watch but they had written her time to leave on a leaflet, and called out the time every 5 minutes. When her 15 minutes was up, she was told she could leave.

She said the whole experience was streamlined and so pleasant. She said the volunteers couldn't have been more helpful. She was told to expect a call in 12 weeks to be invited for the second injection.”

Good luck Gracie for your second jab!

Thanks for sharing your story with us and our readers.

New Staff



We are pleased to welcome our new Volunteer Coordinator Helen Watson. Helen brings to the role a wealth of experience

having worked with volunteers for over 20 years and has been a volunteer herself in a variety of roles since she was 14. Helen says "I am looking forward to taking on a new challenge and getting more people involved in our activities. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact me. Let's have some fun! You can contact Helen on : helen.watson@ageukrbh.org.uk or via our main tel. no: 020 8220 6000.

Digital Service Development Coordinator

We are also pleased to welcome Vivienne



Fairbrass in this new role. Vivienne will be working on the development of online activities facilitating social, cultural and leisure activities for older people across the Boroughs of Redbridge and Barking & Dagenham. She will also be the main contact for helping to develop the

virtual retirement community with Sparko TV as mentioned in our previous newsletter, to enable more older people to enjoy activities, video calling and much more. See leaflet enclosed for more details. Here are some of the comments from people who are using Sparko TV:

"It's absolutely wonderful especially with lockdown. There is something to look forward to every day with live classes and I love seeing different faces, it is keeping me going"

"Very good, I like it when I go on the live sessions, it is just like having a visitor, it perks me up"

Why not try it for yourself? Contact Vivienne on: 020 8220 6000

HOME SUPPORT SERVICE

Throughout the Covid 19 pandemic the staff of the Home Support Service have continued to visit clients providing domestic and shopping assistance and personal care.

Kelly, our Home Support Services manager says: "We have always taken the safety of our service users very seriously and with that in mind we made sure we have plenty of aprons, gloves and masks, hand wash and sanitiser and all staff undertook a special course to make sure they knew exactly how to use this equipment properly in a Covid secure manner. The team have shown their commitment to the older people during this difficult time and were proud to be able to help those who were isolating, feeling lonely and needing a friendly face to help them out.

We are still taking referrals to the service and undertaking face to face assessments to see how we can help as safely as possible if needed (socially distancing and wearing a mask). We will sign post or make onward referrals if we cannot help so that as many people as possible do receive help and support.

Everybody on the Home Support Team would like to wish our service users and their families a safe and healthy 2021 and we look forward to continuing to provide support and help while we battle on through this unprecedented time."

For more information or to request support contact Kelly on: 020 8220 6000 or email: kelly.walsh@ageukrbh.org.uk



EU Settlement Scheme

Are you a citizen of the EU, EEA or Switzerland? Do you live in Redbridge?

Now that the United Kingdom has left the European Union, every EU, EEA & Swiss citizen needs to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme to continue to work, live, access benefits in the UK and study.

Age UK Redbridge, Barking & Havering are working in partnership with Citizens Advice Redbridge to advise and help you with this simple process.

The challenges for older people

Many older people will have been resident in the UK for many years and many of them will be frail due to their age and struggling with disabilities and long term health conditions including dementia. Many older people do not have access to the internet which will make it harder for them to apply for the EU Settlement Scheme.

If you or someone you know needs help to apply for EU Settled Status then please contact us at Age UK Redbridge, Barking & Havering and ask to speak to the Advice & Information Service about the EU Settlement Scheme on:

Tel: 020 8220 6000

Email: advice@ageukrbh.org.uk

Latest News

We would like to make you aware of a scam that is currently circulating involving the sending of a text message to your phone about the Covid vaccine, and asking you to complete a form with your bank details. The NHS would never ask for your bank details and they certainly wouldn't need them for you to get the vaccine. Please don't give your bank details to anyone in this way.

We hope that despite all the restrictions in place you managed to have a nice Christmas and are looking forward to the time when we can all go about our daily lives as before.



If you need support because you are clinically extremely vulnerable, the Redbridge Wellbeing service is there to help. You can contact them on 020 8708 5555; for support in Barking & Dagenham, the number to call is: 020 8215 3000 and in Havering, the council support line is: 0800 368 5201.

If you cannot get the support you need, you can call us on : 020 8220 6000 where we will do our best to get you the support you need.

Corona Virus Testing

In Redbridge, you can book an appointment to visit one of 3 permanent walk through testing facilities, or order a home test kit. The walk through facilities are: Mildmay car park; Gants Hill Library car park; Charteris Car Park. You can book a test on line (for further information on how to do that, visit: www.redbridge.gov.uk/coronavirus-information-hub/coronavirus-testing/ or you can call 0300 300 2713 or 119 for advice.

In Barking & Dagenham, there are 2 walk in test sites, located at Mayesbrook Park car park, Lodge Avenue, Dagenham and Chadwell Heath Community Centre, High Road, Chadwell Heath. You can book a test on line by visiting: www.lbbd.gov.uk

In Havering, you can visit: www.havering.gov.uk and then select corona virus information hub.

There are the following test sites in Havering: Cherry Tree Lane Car Park, Rainham; Dagnam Park Drive, Harold Hill; Havering Town Hall rear car park Romford; Dorrington Gardens, Hornchurch. Most of the test sites are open from 7am to 9pm.

Exercise classes

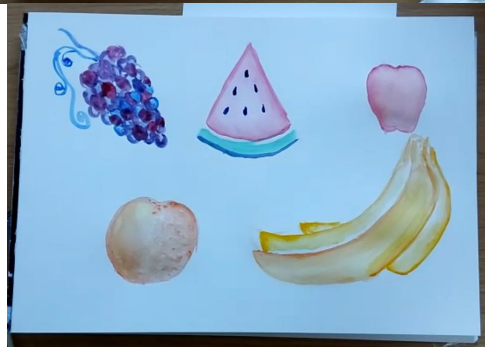
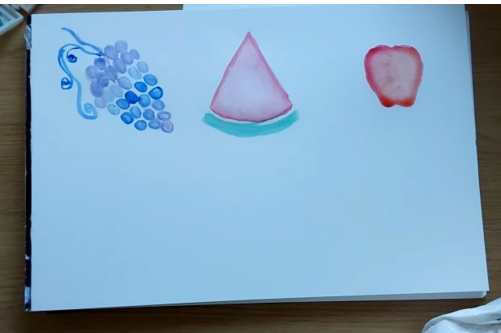


We are currently offering a number of on line exercise classes via Zoom, such as chair based exercise and Tai Chi. Please call us for more information if you are interested to take part. Tel: 020 8220 6000. During December, we held 11 chair exercise sessions and 3 Tai Chi, enabling 180 people to participate.

Additionally, our Di's Diamonds have been providing a number of on line activities, including watercolour, creative writing, coffee mornings, knit and natter, drawing, and even vegetarian cooking!

If you haven't used Zoom yet, and you have access to the internet, why not give Di's Diamonds a call? Once you have joined you can enjoy any of the activities on offer and they will even talk you through using Zoom. Here's what one of the members had to say: "Thank you for all you have done for us and I would like to tell you that you have helped me get through this year with your emails, Facebook and letters. I've watched many Zoom sessions and look forward to the next year. There have been times when I have felt low or blue and I have been able to turn to your communications to help me through this sad time. Thank you." To contact Di's Diamonds

Email: disdiamonds@ageukrbh.org.uk or call 020 8220 6000



Watercolour Sessions with Ioana Macovei

Continuing with the watercolour classes, Di's Diamonds members have been producing some beautiful artwork on Zoom with Ioana Macovei every Monday at 10.30am-12.30pm. Ioana takes a theme each week and uses this as a basis to teach new techniques and skills whilst also encouraging creativity and self-expression. Ioana also produces an art newsletter every week full of inspiration and creative ideas as well as history and culture which goes out to all those who sign up to the mailing list. In her latest newsletter, she shows how to paint a basket of fruit, with step by step instructions and drawings to arrive at the finished product shown bottom left.

To join the classes or receive the art newsletter please contact Di's Diamonds by telephone :

07375 704448 (Havering); 07494035950 (Redbridge, Barking & Dagenham) or by email: disdiamonds@ageukrbh.org.uk

You can also download the newsletter and see Ioana's exhibition video from our website:

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/redbridgebarkinghavering/activities-and-events/art-videos/>