

Age UK Redbridge, Barking & Havering

In these rapidly changing times, it can be difficult to keep up with the latest news. Here are the key points about the current situation with Covid-19, with vaccines, the road out of lockdown and most importantly—when we can all see our loved ones again!

The success of the vaccine programme, with 23,053,716 people having received their first dose (as of 11th March) and 1,251,515 people having received their second dose, there is no doubt that this is one of the things we can be proud of in the United Kingdom. It has enabled us to look forward with hope once more.

The road out of lockdown was announced by the Prime Minister in February and the key dates for the different stages are as follows:

- ◇ 8th March—reopening of schools and colleges
- ◇ People will be allowed to exercise outdoors with their household or support bubble, or with one other person outside their household
- ◇ 29th March—Outdoor gatherings of up to 6 people or 2 different households also outdoor sports facilities can open
- ◇ Stay at home rule ends but people still advised to only travel if necessary
- ◇ 12th April—Non essential retail can open including hairdressers and nail salons, libraries and public buildings., most outdoor attractions and hospitality venues where people can be served outdoors.
- ◇ 17th May—the Government will look to continue easing limits on seeing friends and family where possible and most legal restrictions on meeting outdoors will be lifted. Other indoor locations can open and indoor exercise and sports can resume.

- ◇ 21st June—The Government hopes to be in a position to remove all limits on social contact and social distancing.
- ◇ You can see all of the details on the following: www.gov.uk/corona-virus

All of the above will only go ahead on the dates planned as long as there is no surge in infections, hospital admissions etc. Covid-19 is likely to be with us for some time and we will have to learn to live with it and carry on complying with whatever safety measures are in place and take up the offer of the vaccine when invited.

NEW CONTRACT AWARDED



We are delighted to be awarded the contract for the 'My Health Matters' service by the London Borough of Havering. This is a service aiming to improve health and well-being awareness of people in Havering by recruiting and training volunteers to become Health Champions and support residents to adopt healthier lifestyles. We will be working with Havering Voluntary organisations as well as Havering Council funded organisations to identify residents who would benefit from the service. We look forward to building on the current success of the programme, which will be starting on 1st April 2021. For more info tel: 07538 798478 or 07985 105528. Email:

Myhealthmatters@ageukrbh.org.uk

Would you like to help improve services?

Age UKRBH is looking for people to help improve services for older people – just by telling us what you think!

Local authorities, the NHS, Transport for London . . . all these organisations and more want to know how to design their services so that they are useful for older people.

What do I have to do? Just fill in a questionnaire two or three times a year, or answer questions during one of your Age UK RBH activities.

What do I gain from being involved?

You will be helping all older people just by telling us what you think, and during the process you may meet like-minded people at one of our focus groups or events. You will also become part of the Age UKRBH community improving the lives of older people.

If you want to find out more, please contact Pat on 020 8220 6000 or pat.fitzsimons@ageukrbh.org.uk.

Mindful Movement classes

"There may be many of you who have not had the opportunity or incentive to continue with your usual exercise classes over this lockdown period and you might be feeling a little rusty! We have just the class to gently kick start your exercise routine again. Come and join us on Zoom for Seated Mindful Movement. It takes place every Thursday morning at 10.00am and it lasts for 35 minutes approximately.

Mindful Movement is a series of very gentle stretches and slow repetitive movements. It involves noticing and paying attention to specific areas of the body as you stretch and move. All you will need is a chair with good support and that you are in a space in which you can move your arms and legs freely.

If you would like to try this class then please email lorraine.barfoot@ageukrbh.org.uk to receive joining instructions and your zoom link."



Fundraising News

We at Age UK Redbridge Barking & Havering are doing all we can to raise funds to continue to meet the needs of older people. Numbers requesting urgent support have greatly increased during the pandemic. One way we are fundraising is by forging links with local organisations. We were fortunate to have had donations from both Toyota Lexus and Ford Britain last year. The Coop and Tesco supermarkets have also given us small grants. We know many are missing family and friends and we would like to see a reduction in the amount of those digitally excluded; those without an internet connection. We are therefore also fundraising to support access to on-line connection at home. One of our projects in this area is for older people to access painting, drawing, exercise and other workshops, which will promote interaction with others and reduce the feeling of loneliness and isolation. As part of this work we have partnered with an organisation called Sparko who provide HDMI ports that attach to the TV. HDMI ports provide a simple way of connection to the outside world meaning on-line workshops such as those above; linking to family, friends, gardeners etc. is easy. Please contact us if you are interested on: 020 8220 6000

Lastly, we would like to give a big thank you to everyone that has contributed to our fundraising efforts, including those that have purchased Redbridge Council Lottery tickets. For each ticket sold, Age UK RBH gets a small proportion of the ticket price; every penny helps so please purchase a ticket if you can. Visit [:redbridgelottery.co.uk](http://redbridgelottery.co.uk)

Care Navigation Service - As of 8th March, people in England will see restrictions start to lift and the Government's four-step Roadmap will offer a route back to a more normal life. This sounds easy but some people may have lost their confidence in going out, suffering from anxiety, panic attacks or depression. People on the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable List who have been shielding may feel anxious about returning back to some sort of normality. Those of you that may be suffering from Long Covid may also require some support to rebuild your confidence. The Care Navigation Service is here to support you on this road to getting back to some sort of normality.

This service is free to people aged 50+, living in the boroughs of Redbridge, Havering and Barking & Dagenham

The Care Navigation Service aims to help meet your needs in a holistic way as well as enabling you to best manage and maintain your health & wellbeing. If you are having difficulties coping with issues such as: getting out and about, socialising, having difficulty with managing your long term health conditions, feeling lonely / isolated, or losing your confidence, we can help.

Our Care Navigation Team will contact you and have a conversation with you, so we can get to know a bit about you and your circumstances, your hobbies, your likes and dislikes, your wishes and worries, and your goals for the future. We will help you think about what you'd like to do and draw up a personalised support plan to follow up the things you're interested in achieving.

How we can support you to improve your health & wellbeing

- By supporting you to groups and activities initially to build up your confidence
- Support to apply for accessible transport such as Dial a Ride, Taxi Card, Blue Badge
- To meet new people and make friends
- To be more active

- Reducing loneliness & isolation
- Support to access other Age UK & local services

Here is some feedback we received from a Care Navigation client who was helped by a number of different services through her contact with us.

Our Care Navigator met up with the client for a "walk and talk session" which she really enjoyed.

She was signposted to Trust Mark for details of Trades People she could trust.

She was also referred to our Di's Diamonds service and to Sparko TV where she is enjoying the many activities available to her. Through Sparko TV she is able to talk to family living abroad.

She Commented: " Since joining Age UK RBH in July 2020, my confidence and ability to try new things have grown. I feel a lot happier now, and I'm looking forward to making new connections with new found friends"



SPARKO TV UPDATE

We currently have 24 clients enjoying the Sparko system, the system was in place for 10 clients and an additional 14 have been installed during February & March.

The clients are enjoying a variety of activities along with films and connecting with family members, many have expressed "its like a social club in my living room"

The service continues to grow ! For more info contact : 020 8220 6000 or email: vivienne.fairbrass@ageukrbh.org.uk



Forget me Not Befriending Service

Our befriending service has seen a huge increase in demand over the last 12 months. As people have struggled with loneliness and isolation during the pandemic, our befriending volunteers assisted by staff members made more than a staggering 22,000 phone calls over the last 9 months alone. A friendly voice at the end of the phone has been a lifeline for many, and staff and volunteers have made them

mostly from home, often whilst being isolated themselves. Whilst chatting to our service users, volunteers have taken the opportunity to check up on their well-being, and making referrals to other services as appropriate where required. The referrals may have been to other Age UKRBH services or to external agencies including Social Services, and we have been able to help many people by providing volunteers who can get shopping, and collect prescriptions for people who are shielding. As soon as we the restrictions are relaxed and it is safe to do so, our visiting volunteers will begin visiting our socially isolated clients again, for many that can't come a day too soon!

For more information on our befriending services contact Nikki on : 020 8220 6000

On line Zoom classes

Not into Zoom yet? If you have the internet and would like to try out an on line class, here are some of the classes on offer, and they are all free!

Watercolour on Monday at 10.15 am

Poetry every 2nd Wednesday of the month at 10.30

Book Club every third Wednesday of the month at 10.30

Monthly quiz last Wednesday of the month 3pm

Coffee morning-Thursdays at 11am - catch up, meet new members feel free to bring your crafts and share your passion

Drawing Fridays 10.30am

Tai Chi classes Tuesdays (Redbridge residents) and Thursdays with Dis Diamonds

Wednesday and Thursday chair based exercise classes to improve balance for Redbridge residents

Mindful movement classes on Thursdays for Havering and Barking & Dagenham residents.

For more details please call: 020 8220 6000 or email: admin@ageukrbh.org.uk

Visit our website: www.ageuk.org.uk/redbridgebarkinghavering/on-line-activities