

Voices of Experience

We are the voice of older people in the London borough of Redbridge.

Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter!

Find out what older people think of local services & get the latest news.

[Click here](#) to find out more!



Picture: Fairlop Waters Country Park

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... *plus more!*

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Contact Us

➡ Our Report on Digital Skills

During April - August 2023, 121 older people in Redbridge completed our survey on digital skills. The survey aimed to understand how comfortable people are with using digital technology and what areas they may need more support or training in. It also aimed to identify whether people feel digitally excluded from some services and activities and how this impacts on their daily lives.

We found that the older people are, the less likely they are, to own a digital device, or to have the skills and confidence to make the most out of them.

For example, fewer than half of respondents aged 75 - 89 (47%) own a smart-phone, this compares with 78% for those aged 65 - 74, and 100% for 50 - 64 year olds. On skills, just 39% of those aged 75 - 89 feel confident to use their smart-phone, comparing with 69% for respondents aged 50 - 64.



The move to online services has been rapid

This sort of disadvantage, along with the rapid move to online-only services, has clearly resulted in inequality and exclusion. Services with an online access requirement have been problematic for 36% of respondents (again many of them older) and just 33% were offered an alternative access method.

We have heard accounts of staff insisting on the online method, with advice to 'get family or friends to help'. When someone has outlined difficulties with technology, we feel that this kind of approach is inappropriate, and unreasonable. There should always be an alternative and people should always be supported. Read more in our full report. ➡ [More](#)

“The computer class has really helped!”

Join us today and have your say!

➡ New Survey on Social Isolation and Loneliness

Older people may become lonely after the loss of a spouse or a loved one.

Other common triggers include retiring from work, children leaving home, having reduced mobility, or no longer being able to participate in enjoyable activities for some reason.



Aiming to tackle social isolation

During the pandemic, many people experienced for the first time, what some older people had been experiencing all the time.

“I want to be involved in decisions about me.”

Join us today and have your say!

For some people, there was no difference because they already felt isolated and lonely.

Social isolation is a measure of the number of contacts people have. Loneliness relates to the quality of those relationships. People may happily choose to have only a few contacts, but they may not choose to be lonely.

The purpose of this survey is to establish reasons and frequency of social isolation in the local population - and importantly to help address the issues once identified.

The survey closes on 16th November 2023. Complete it now online (paper copies on request). ➡ [More](#)

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✉ sue.grant@ageukrbh.org.uk

➡ Our New Nail Cutting Service!

We are proud to announce the opening of our first Nail Cutting Clinic, coming soon to the Ilford Office. Many older people find it difficult to trim their own toenails and maintain regular upkeep of good foot health. As well as being uncomfortable, it can lead to an increased risk of foot problems.



A professional service at affordable rates

Sami Jobanputra, our Business Development Worker has been leading the project to provide a clinic within our Ilford Office. For a fee, service users will be able to attend a pre-booked appointment to have their toenails trimmed by a qualified Practitioner.

So far the response has been overwhelmingly positive from both potential service users as well as fellow organisations within the industry. There is a genuine need for this service and we are thrilled to be able to provide a service to improve and maintain the quality of life for older people living in the London boroughs of Redbridge, Barking and Havering.

“I use my freedom pass most days.”

Join us today and have your say!

Initially, the clinic will be open one day a week and we will be working towards extending this, as well as opening clinics within our neighbouring boroughs of Barking and Havering.

Whilst we are working on the final stages of the clinic, you can find out more, and register your interest on the website. Any questions can also be directed to Sami. ➡ [More](#)

☎ 07943 877035

➡ Our Falls Prevention Service

Falls are the biggest cause of accidents in the home and one in three people over the age of 65 fall each year. This increases to one in two for people aged over 80. The good news is that falls are not an inevitable part of ageing, many can be prevented and our Falls Prevention service is here to help.

Service Coordinator, Glenda Templeman recently spoke at a Care Forum event, attended by 160 people. This was an opportunity to learn more about falls, and about the range of services we currently offer in the borough. The talk was very well received. We might be able to come to your group or event, simply get in touch (contact details below).



Out and about - promoting falls prevention

On the service itself, one of our chair based exercise group members says "I suffered from lower back and hip pain and my yoga class wasn't really helping. I joined the Age UK Chair Exercise class based at Ilford library. I went along, continued and now I can walk without having to stop here and there to regain my composure. The tutor is very helpful and she concentrates on my individual needs'.

Our service offer includes a range of activities, such as Tai Chi and Nordic Walking.

To find out more about our Falls Prevention service, visit the website or get in touch. ➡ [More](#)

☎ 020 8220 6000

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“It's difficult to register for NHS dentistry.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ How to Beat Bowel Cancer

Someone dies of bowel cancer every 30 minutes in the UK. It's the second biggest cancer killer, but it shouldn't be, because it's treatable and curable. Nearly everyone diagnosed at the earliest stages will survive the disease. Knowing the symptoms is so important - it really could save your life.

That's why the North East London Cancer Alliance is supporting Bowel Cancer UK to ensure more people know the top 5 symptoms of bowel cancer.

Main Symptoms: The red flag symptoms of bowel cancer are bleeding from your bottom and/or blood in your poo; a persistent and unexplained change in bowel habit; unexplained weight loss; extreme tiredness for no obvious reason; a pain or lump in your tummy.



You can get a home testing kit

Most people with these symptoms won't have bowel cancer. Other health problems can cause similar symptoms. But if you experience one or more of these, or if things just don't feel right, contact your GP straight away.

NHS bowel screening checks are free and are currently available to everyone aged 54 to 74 years. The programme is expanding next year to everyone aged 52 to 74 and then to 50 to 74 the year after. If you're 75 or over, you can ask for a kit every 2 years by phoning the free bowel cancer screening helpline on 0800 707 60 60. You can also find out more on the website. ➔ [More](#)

“The phone is engaged constantly!”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Where to Get a Blood Test in Redbridge?

The local blood testing service aims to reduce waiting times and ensure urgent tests can be booked for the same or next day. Tests are available on weekends at some sites.



All blood tests must be booked in advance

The target is for all patients to be able to have their blood test within seven days. All bookings and cancellations can be made online or by phone.

The service is delivered by North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT), Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust (BHRUT) and primary care providers.

There are currently no walk-in services available for Redbridge patients - all blood tests must be booked in advance. Visit the official website, for more information plus a full list of services. ➔ [More](#)

“Lots of activities here for residents.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Introducing TARACC

The Association of Redbridge African Caribbean Communities (TARACC) aims to reduce local isolation.

They offer a wide range of local activities, including walking groups, golf, coffee mornings, women's hour, social meetups and meetings for members.

To find out more, visit the website. ➔ [More](#)

➔ Informative Telephone Groups for Older People

Independent Age writes "Our Good to Know Telephone Groups are social and learning opportunities for people who may not be online or who may struggle to get out and about."



Like a 'cup of tea and a chat'

Think of these groups like a cup of tea and a chat at a community centre - but over the phone and in the comfort of your home.

Resident Fiona says 'It was the highlight of my week. There are people from all sorts of walks and backgrounds... everybody's got something to contribute.'

"A lack of public toilets in town."

Join us today and have your say!

What do the groups offer? Groups take place about four times a month and last for an hour.

Each time, we invite a different guest speaker to talk about topics like managing finances, scam awareness, seated exercise, volunteering, creative writing and getting online. There's always a chance to interact and learn something new.

We've had guest speakers from The Sleep Charity, MIND, The Reader, Turn2Us, DeafBlind and many more". To find out more:

☎ 0800 319 6789

📧 telephone.services@independentage.org

➔ Our Volunteer Befrienders

Pat Farrell has now joined the Age UK team as the Home Visiting Volunteer Befriending Coordinator for the South Havering project (BHVS). The BHVS is a home visiting service to housebound patients who require a face-to-face support model.

The patients typically referred to the BHVS are housebound as a result of physical, mental, demographic or social isolation and vulnerability.

There is no "one size fits all" and the service will take account of many factors that will deliver the most suitable and appropriate support through direct one-to-one home visiting.



We can engage in-person, or remotely

Befriending relationships aim to be non-judgemental, supportive, and there is a commitment over time. It may be delivered face to face or remotely such as by telephone. Find out more on the website. ➔ [More](#)

➔ Introducing The Café @ Loxford

Redbridge Council in partnership with local charity, Serving Humanity Foundation has launched The Café @ Loxford. The aim of this weekly event is to encourage conversation and support local people to connect and reduce loneliness and social isolation.

Residents can join for a hot drink, a bite to eat and a board game or two every Sunday, 11.30am - 3pm. Loxford Polyclinic, 417 Ilford Lane, Ilford, IG1 2PF

"Good communication on the ward is vital."

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Have Your Say On Local Flood Risk Plans!

Local people are being invited to share their views on Redbridge's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) to help shape how flood risks are managed in the borough.

The LFRMS, which is updated every 6 years or when there is a significant change in policy or legislation around flood risk, sets out which public bodies are responsible for which types of flooding, as well as objectives for managing local flood risks.

As part of the updated strategy being shared for local feedback, communities across the borough are also being asked to pinpoint locations on an online map of where they have experienced flooding.



What's your view on the local plans?

This information will add to data already collated as part of the updated LFRMS, to help shape work taking place in the borough to tackle flooding. The survey closes on 20th August. ➔ [More](#)

➔ Flash Flood Awareness

The Greater London Authority writes "As the climate changes, we expect severe flooding to happen more frequently in London. Flash floods are difficult to predict and often happen quickly with fast flowing water. They are more likely to happen during intense summer storms. Our flash flood advice can help you prepare. We have also developed a leaflet for Londoners who live in basements. To find out more, visit the website. ➔ [More](#)

"I have to wait 2 weeks to see my GP."

Join us today and have your say!

➔ New Research Centre for Healthy Ageing

Barts Health NHS Trust and Queen Mary University London have unveiled plans for an Academic Centre for Healthy Ageing - hosted locally at Whipps Cross Hospital, to improve the quality of life for millions of people in London.



Helping us to age healthily

The new centre will create a collaborative network of clinicians, researchers, educators, policymakers and the local community to transform how services work for older people, supporting them to live well and independently.

The centre will work across the region to support and inform better clinical services through healthcare training underpinned by the latest research. Find out more about the new project on the website. ➔ [More](#)

➔ Introducing the Redbridge 'Data Bank'

Are you struggling to pay your monthly mobile bills? Then Redbridge Libraries could help! They are participating in the National Databank Programme to provide free internet access to anyone struggling to afford to get online.

They have a limited number of SIM cards available each month.

These will be allocated on a first come, first served basis and must be collected in person from one of the following libraries: Fullwell Cross, Gants Hill, Goodmayes, Hainault, Keith Axon, Redbridge Central or Wanstead.

Cards and vouchers will only be issued to you if there are enough supplies. If demand is exceeded, you will be placed on a waiting list and offered a card or voucher at the next available opportunity. ➔ [More](#)

➡ TfL Promotes Step-Free Access

The Transport for London (TfL) app makes it easier to find step-free travel information in London.

Open the app and turn-on the accessibility features by activating the step-free button on the top left of the screen. The new 'carousel' explains how to make the most of the step-free features in the app.



Helping you to plan accessible journeys

You can now tap on a station in the map to discover more about all stations' accessibility information, and if you use voice-over or talk-back, you can access station step-free information by searching for a station name.

To plan accessible journeys, find platform access information, live lift status and toilet information download TfL Go to your devices. ➡ [More](#)

➡ Help Shape Bereavement Services

The local NHS writes "The NHS and partners in Waltham Forest, Redbridge and West Essex would like to hear from local people who have lost someone close to them about their experiences, feelings and needs around bereavement and grief.

We appreciate that this may be a very difficult time for you and that discussions can be uncomfortable, however if you feel that you would like to, and are able to contribute, we would appreciate your input so we can put the right support in place". ➡ [More](#)

"Took up painting and found I was good!"

Join us today and have your say!

➡ Cost of Living - A 'Barrier to Healthcare'

Healthwatch England writes "Over the last year, many charities and campaign groups have warned that millions of people are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis.

We have heard from our Healthwatch network about the impact the cost of living is having on people. To understand the scale and nature of this impact, especially on people's health and their use of health and care services, we commissioned a nationally representative (of England) poll.

Our poll of 2,000 adults, conducted four times between October 2022 and March 2023, suggests that people are increasingly avoiding vital health and care services due to the fear of extra costs.



People are 'increasingly avoiding' health services

"I need to be recognised as a carer."

Join us today and have your say!

This includes going to a dentist because of the cost of check ups or treatment, booking an NHS appointment because they couldn't afford the associated costs (such as accessing the internet or the cost of a phone call), buying over the counter medication they normally rely on, and taking up one or more NHS prescriptions because of the cost.

One person says "I can't get a GP appointment. The highest I have ever got in the telephone queue is number 11, and so I gave up in the end as it was costing me a lot of money on my telephone bill and I am a pensioner. All I want is a referral to an audiologist as I am losing my hearing." ➡ [More](#)

➡ Introducing Di's Diamonds!

Di's Diamonds & Diamond Geezers enjoy a variety of social activities.

Diamonds Geezers meet every Monday, 3.00 - 5.00pm at Harrow Pub in Hornchurch. Di's Diamonds meet regularly for coffee mornings and meals across the three boroughs in coffee bars, at libraries and pubs.



Theatre-goers getting back-stage access!

We also meet for regular tea dances, bowling, talks, and trips to the cinema, museums and theatres. On Zoom we have tai chi, watercolour art and poetry.

“Hard to register for a parking permit.”

Join us today and have your say!

A bright future for Di's Diamonds!

We would like to thank the National Lottery, for providing over £425,000 for the next 5 years starting April 2023, to support the work of the Di's Diamonds project across Redbridge, Barking and Dagenham and Havering.

The service is also excited to receive further Health Inequalities funding in Havering to December 2023 to further develop activity programmes at the Harold Wood Hub following a successful pilot between January - April 2023.

We are planning new activities with our partners including more art and crafts workshops with Create and new origami workshops.

Find out more on our website. ➡ [More](#)

➡ New Cooks at Wanstead Activity Centre!

Centre Manager, Jackie Balman writes "Wanstead Activity Centre has the pleasure of introducing our fabulous new cooks Teresa and Julie, who will be preparing freshly cooked meals Monday to Friday.

Both new members of staff are very passionate about cooking and have previously volunteered for Age UK RBH so it is wonderful to have them on board! Manager Jackie, volunteers and visitors to the Allan Burgess centre have all been very impressed by the lovely lunches being served.



New cooks - Teresa and Julie

Please come and join us and try their meals for yourselves! Just £4.50 for a main course and £2.50 for a dessert. An extra 50p on a Friday for that all important Yorkshire Pud on our famous Friday Roast.

All we ask is that you phone the manager Jackie on 0208 989 6338 before 11am on the day of your visit, so we can reserve your seat".

What do our members say? Each year our members complete a brief survey, to tell us what they think of the centre. In our most recent survey (ending February 2023) 96% said the service was 'excellent value for money' while 83% say the centre is 'exceptional'.

To find out more, drop in, Monday to Friday 10am - 2pm at The Allan Burgess Centre, 2 Grove Park. Wanstead, E11 2D. You can also give us a call, or visit the website. ➡ [More](#)

“Accessibility aids help me stay independent.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Eight Tips for Healthy Eating - A Guide!

This online guide, from the NHS outlines eight practical tips which cover the basics of healthy eating, and can help you make healthier choices.

The key to a healthy diet is to eat the right amount of calories for how active you are, so that you balance the energy you consume with the energy you use.

If you eat or drink too much, you'll put on weight.

On the other hand, if you eat and drink too little, you'll lose weight.



Eat a 'wide range of food' for a balanced diet!

Eat a wide range of foods to ensure that you're getting a balanced diet and that your body is receiving all the nutrients it needs. ➔ [More](#)

Latest Newsletters

- ➔ Age UK - Health and Wellbeing Newsletters (Sign Up!) ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Redbridge Council Newsletters (Sign Up!) ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Alzheimer's Society - Dementia Together Magazines ➔ [More](#)

Please send us a link to your latest newsletter!

Health & Wellbeing Roundup

- ➔ The latest news, campaigns and events from Age UK ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ The latest news from Barts Health NHS Trust ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ The latest news from Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ The latest news from North East London NHS Foundation Trust ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Thousands of sickle cell patients to benefit from quicker access to expert NHS care ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS announces nominations of health service heroes ahead of 75th birthday ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Retired specialists set to help with tackling Covid backlog ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ 40% of unpaid carers face financial difficulties, new research found ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Weekly visits to NHS website's hay fever advice reach 122,000 as pollen levels rise ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Age UK on supporting carers in the community ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Age UK on how benefits checks can change lives ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Patients to benefit from faster care, under major new GP access recovery plan ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Number of patients receiving lifesaving NHS cancer checks has doubled in a decade ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Labour-commissioned report sets out plans for National Care Service ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS plan to improve workforce experience ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Number of repeat prescriptions ordered via NHS App up by 92% in the last year ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Age UK on 'retirement on the road' ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Harnessing technology to tackle the challenges of assessing pain in people with dementia ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ New NHS measures to improve eye care and cut waiting times ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Government takes action to strengthen local care systems ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Tennis star Sir Andy Murray OBE backs 'parkrun for the NHS' ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Our unsung heroes: Recognising carers in home care ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Sara Hurley, the Chief Dental Officer for England, to stand down ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Age UK on developing 'crucial connections' ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Celebrities support volunteering with Age UK ➔ [More](#)

HOW ARE YOU?

In our adult years, the lifestyle choices we make can dramatically increase our chances of becoming ill later in life.

Making small changes now can improve your health right away and double your chances of staying healthy as you get older. It's never too late to start.

Talk to your doctor or nurse about your health today.

BECAUSE THERE'S ONLY
ONE YOU