

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: Valentines Park in Winter

In this Issue!

Voices Update!	2
Our Nail Cutting Service is Expanding! Age UK Volunteer Awarded MBE!	3
The Cost of Living 'Shouldn't Be a Barrier to Care' When to Use NHS 111 and How it Can Help	4
Healthy Redbridge Bus Falls Prevention & Awareness - Book a Talk!	5
The 'Hub of Hope' App for Mental Health Phone Lines - Moving Over to 'Digital Voice'	6
New App-Based Dial-a-Ride Booking System Health Inequalities Survey	7

... plus more!

020 8220 6000
www.ageuk.org.uk/redbridgebarkinghavering
admin@ageukrbh.org.uk
4th Floor, 103 Cranbrook Road, Ilford, IG1 4PU

Available in additional formats

Contact Us

➡ Our Report on Social Isolation & Loneliness

During August - November 2023, 120 local people in Redbridge completed our survey on social isolation and loneliness.

Findings reveal that poor health is a leading cause of isolation, and that those in good health, are much less likely to be affected.

Of the respondents citing poor health, three quarters (73%) say they often feel isolated, two thirds (64%) lack companionship, go out just once a week (or less), or have poor life satisfaction, and almost half (45%) feel 'left out' and have inadequate support networks.



Understanding the causes of isolation

We have heard about a lack of awareness on what is available, a lack of support or difficulty with costs, poor self-esteem and motivation, and family, friends or neighbours who are 'too busy' to assist.

More generally, we are told that coping after bereavement can be difficult, and take a long time, and that the evenings can be especially difficult.

There is a difference between the genders - women are more likely to lack companionship and to feel 'left out' while men are more likely to feel isolated, and as a whole, are 'less satisfied' with life.

On households, we are surprised to find that those living alone, are less likely to feel isolated, and also go out more often - than those living with others. Find out more in the full report. ➡ [More](#)

“The automatic callback is a good idea!”

Join us today and have your say!

➡ Our New Survey on GP Access

We have decided to recycle a previous survey, the 'GP Access Survey' as we would really like to know if 15 months on, anything has changed in the local community. Questions like, waiting times for appointments, how satisfied people are with their GP service and whether they need to be digitally confident to access services, will all be re-explored.



What's your experience of GP access?

We are interested to know if things have improved since our previous recommendations were made, or, if they have not changed or have become worse, then we can take our findings to the local and wider professional bodies to explore improvements.

“My pharmacist had the answers!”

Join us today and have your say!

Last time, in Autumn 2022, GP services were still emerging from the fall out of Covid 19 and so it will be interesting to see if anything has changed since this very significant and unprecedented event. We have also rattled through 5 Secretaries of State for Health and Social Care in the last 18 months, so it will also be fascinating to see if that has had any impact.

A full report on the survey and any subsequent findings will be available around late March 2024.

The survey is available online now, paper copies on request. ➡ [More](#)

☎ 020 8911 2927

✉ sue.grant@ageukrbh.org.uk

➡ Our Nail Cutting Service is Expanding!

Many older people find it hard to cut their own toenails. This can lead to a risk of foot problems as well as being uncomfortable. Keeping nails trimmed, especially the toenails can help maintain mobility and keep you active.

Age UK Redbridge, Barking and Havering provide an affordable service within a safe and trustworthy environment.



A professional service at affordable rates!

Residents of the older community can now have their nails trimmed at the Age UK Ilford office every 6 weeks or when required.

The Nail Cutting Clinic is open on Tuesdays from 10am to 4pm and by appointment only.

We are working towards opening more clinics across our boroughs as well as a mobile service.

“I had both jobs at the same time!”

Join us today and have your say!

From Monday 11th December 2023, clients can visit Wanstead Activity Centre (at 2 Grove Park) between 1pm - 3pm for a 20 minute appointment, for toenails and fingers if required.

To book, and for more information please visit the website. ➡ [More](#)

You can also contact Sami Jobanputra, Business Development Manager:

☎ 07943 877035

➡ Age UK Volunteer Awarded MBE!

We are delighted to announce that Geraldine Maclaine, a former volunteer with our befriending service, has recently been awarded with an MBE.

Nikki Gardner, Befriending Coordinator writes “I started working with Geraldine in 2013 working alongside her with the Bogus Caller Partnership.

I would go out with her, sometimes with the Fire Brigade, on visits to older vulnerable clients.

Then when my work load got heavier, I would send her a list of some of our clients (who had agreed to a visit from Geraldine).



Geraldine Maclaine MBE

Geraldine would then visit them with another volunteer and do the assessments, and show the clients how to be aware of bogus callers with a short video. Geraldine carried this on until a few years ago when her health declined.

Geraldine was the lady who put our FMN Service forward for the Queen’s Jubilee Award for the ‘volunteer service by groups in the community’ award.

We were successful, and volunteer James and I went to a Buckingham Palace Garden Party.

I am so pleased that Geraldine has been honoured with an MBE for all her tireless work for charities and the people of Redbridge.”

“Step free access is a must, when I travel.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Cost of Living 'Shouldn't Be a Barrier to Care'

Healthwatch England writes "As the cost of living crisis challenges our basic human needs, rising costs mean many of us are having to adapt our spending to keep on top of expenses.

You might be having to make tough decisions, cutting back on what you're spending on food, heating and your health to pay your bills.

The cost of living crisis shouldn't be a barrier to care. Prioritise your health. If you have a chronic condition, a new illness causing concern or feel ill, seek the appropriate professional healthcare support. Many pharmacists can support you with everyday health concerns, meaning you may not need to visit your GP. You should only go to a hospital in an emergency.



Keep your medical appointments, if booked

Take your medication. Many of us take medication to stay healthy and manage existing health conditions. With the recent increase in prescription charges, rationing medicines to save money may seem like a good idea, but it can lead to health complications in the long run. You might be eligible for support with your prescription with a Prescription Prepayment Certificate. Prescriptions are free for those over 60.

Keep your appointments. Please attend any pre-arranged or regular appointments with your GP, dentist, optician or hospital. If you're worried about the increase in transport fares, check out what support is available when travelling to your GP, hospital or other NHS services." ➔ [More](#)

"Staff need awareness of different cultures."

Join us today and have your say!

➔ When to Use NHS 111 and How it Can Help

Healthwatch England writes "The NHS wants to make it easier and safer for patients to get the right treatment when they need it, without waiting a long time to be seen in A&E.



Phone, or use the online portal

If you have an urgent but not life-threatening health problem, you can now contact NHS 111 to find out if you need to go to A&E. Call 111 or use the online portal (111.nhs.uk).

They can book an appointment at your local A&E or emergency department (the time given will be a rough guide for when you will get seen). It allows the NHS to better manage patient flow and overcrowding at A&E, with the aim for people to get seen sooner.

Your NHS 111 advisor or clinician could also make you a direct appointment with a GP, Pharmacist or Urgent Treatment Centre. They can also give you the advice you need without using another service.

"Electronic prescriptions save time!"

Join us today and have your say!

If you need an urgent face-to-face assessment or treatment, they can arrange this immediately. No one who turns up in A&E should be turned away or asked to call NHS 111". ➔ [More](#)

What to do in an emergency?

In the event of a life-threatening emergency, you should call 999 or go straight to your nearest emergency department.

➔ Healthy Redbridge Bus - Hop On Board!

Redbridge Council writes "If you're out and in the borough over the coming months, keep an eye out for the new Healthy Redbridge Bus.

The Healthy Redbridge Bus is an initiative led by Redbridge Council and our healthcare partners to provide health checks, vaccinations and other preventative services that can help your health in the long run.



A vast array of services, including vaccines

Some of the services available on the Bus include cholesterol, sugar levels, blood pressure, BMI and pulse checks, advice on cardiovascular disease and prevention, winter vaccination clinics, smoking cessation services and substance misuse services.

The Bus recently visited Ilford Town Centre, where more than 40 people hopped on board to receive a range of different health checks.

“I like to be recognised on arrival.”

Join us today and have your say!

The Healthy Bus is part of Redbridge Council's commitment to decentralising council services, providing vital services in the centre of communities that need them most.

As part of the programme, Redbridge Council also launched the new Ilford Engagement Hub in the heart of one of its busiest high streets and most deprived areas. The new hub will provide struggling Londoners with a range of council services, including cost-of-living support and advice.” ➔ [More](#)

➔ Falls Prevention & Awareness - Book a Talk!

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.

As well as our comprehensive support service, we also visit local groups and organisations to raise awareness and to give practical advice.

Recently in October, the service co-ordinator Glenda Templeman gave a talk at Hope Cafe, Bridge Church in South Woodford. The session was complimented as being 'very informative' by attendees.



Service Coordinator Glenda, at Ask Care

At another talk in September, members of the Partially Sighted Society said 'thanks for pointing out the simple things we can do, to help keep safe'.

We also spoke recently at Ask Care and the Interfaith Group, attended by over 100 people.

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

✉ glenda.templeman@ageukrbh.org.uk

“NHS 111 gave spot on advice!”

Join us today and have your say!

➡ The 'Hub of Hope' App for Mental Health

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) writes "As we approach the festive season, please remember that the Hub of Hope, the UK's fastest growing and most comprehensive mental health support database, is free to use at any point.

The Hub of Hope is the UK's leading mental health support database, bringing together local, national, peer, community, charity, private and NHS mental health support services for the first time. The database was developed by national charity and partner of CNWL, Chasing the Stigma, to signpost people towards vital mental health support in their local area.

The resource can be accessed online or downloaded for FREE from Apple App or Google Play Store.



Improving mental health and wellbeing

So far 13,000 (and growing!) mental health services have registered themselves onto the database and over 650,000 people have used the Hub of Hope.

To use the app, simply enter your postcode and select what kind of support you require from a series of options. The app will then generate a list of suitable services closest to you.

Some of the most frequently searched terms include depression, anxiety, eating disorders, advice and support, women's support, bereavement and loneliness."

Find out more in the full article. ➡ [More](#)

"I need to shop around for bargains now."

Join us today and have your say!

➡ Phone Lines - Moving Over to 'Digital Voice'

BT's digital home phone switch over is called Digital Voice. The current landline telephone network is being switched off by 31st December 2025.

The reason for the switch over is that the current cables are over 100 years old and they are hard to replace. The current system is very 'power hungry' and it is not just BT but a whole 'industry change' of system. The new system will offer better quality of calls and be more energy efficient.



99% of phones will work on the new system

With Digital Voice, your phone will plug into a black box called a router. You will be able to keep the same telephone number and you will pay the same price and have the same contract.

It has an enhanced scam protect feature, protecting people from scam calls and fraud. There is a 3-way calling option, connecting people with multiple family & friends, and the connection is 'very clear'.

"Appointment cancelled without notification."

Join us today and have your say!

If people have no mobile signal where they live, are vulnerable customers, lifeline users, are over 75 years, or only use a landline - their switch over to the new system is being delayed, in order to take more care and attention for these customers. However, eventually all phones will be migrated.

Our colleagues at Age UK have produced an online resource, explaining in detail what is happening and how. Please share widely. ➡ [More](#)

➡ New App-Based Dial-a-Ride Booking System

Transport for London writes “Dial-a-Ride is a vital free service that supports older and disabled Londoners, to get them to where they need to be.

The new app-based booking system offers members and caregivers access to an additional channel to the existing telephone booking system and allows members to book journeys and manage their bookings.

Members are now able to download and use the app to book journeys from 20th November onwards.

The new app will improve the accessibility and efficiency of the service, with customers being able to book more quickly, track where their driver is, update any details related to their ride, and cancel a trip without having to call the contact centre.



Helping to ‘meet your specific needs’

Members will be able to customise their app with accessibility features to meet their specific needs, such as options to assist those with impaired vision with voice overs and adaptive font size. The new system will help us schedule trips more efficiently, benefitting both members and drivers through better planning of journeys.

We will be letting customers know about the new system using various communication channels including posters, leaflets and recorded messages on our phone lines when members call the contact centre.”

“Local services are much more convenient.”

Join us today and have your say!

➡ Health Inequalities Survey

Healthwatch Redbridge writes “Health inequalities are unfair, and differences in health across the population, and between different groups within society are avoidable.

These include how long people are likely to live, the health conditions they may experience and the care that is available to them.



Helping to ensure ‘fair and equal access’

If you are a Redbridge resident, please take a moment to complete our new survey.

The information you provide within this survey can help healthcare professionals and policymakers to identify the specific needs of different groups, helping improve local services and making them equal for all.”

The survey is available now. ➡ [More](#)

“Carers need greater recognition.”

Join us today and have your say!

➡ Saint Francis Hospice - Support Service

Saint Francis Hospice provides a telephone support line, Orangeline, for any local person of any age who may be bereaved, feeling isolated or lonely.

OrangeLine is open Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm and you do not need to have a connection with Saint Francis Hospice. They are only a phone call away.

Call on 01708 758649 or visit the website. ➡ [More](#)

➡ Loan Shark Awareness Training

It is estimated that over a million people across the country are victims of loan shark activities, which translates to around 6,400 affected residents in Redbridge.



Free online sessions - book yours now!

The National Illegal Moneylending Team, a unit of the police, is providing training for professionals.

Learn how loan sharks prey on residents, how to spot loan shark activity and what avenues there are for victims to escape the clutches of these criminals.

Sessions are currently scheduled until the end of January 2024.

Book your place online now. ➡ [More](#)

“I made new friends at the activity centre.”

Join us today and have your say!

➡ Toasty Fridays at Ilford Community Grocery!

The community grocery writes “Who doesn't love tea, toast and a good chat?”

This is why we've launched our Toasty Fridays! They'll be running every Friday from September 2023 onwards, on the ground floor at City Gate Church.

All you need to do is drop in between 10.30am and 12.00pm for a brew, chat and of course, some toast!

Everyone is welcome, and it's totally free! It will be a great place to meet new people.”

➡ Drug & Alcohol Support

Charity 'Via R3' writes “We provide treatment, advice and support for young people and adults who would like to change their drug or alcohol use.

But we also know that someone else's drug or alcohol use can be difficult for their friends, family and loved ones.

Our Family and Carers' Service supports people who are struggling to understand or help a loved one with their drug or alcohol use, or experiencing stress, worry or anxiety about it.



You are not alone, support is available

This free, confidential, and non-judgemental service is available to anyone who lives in Redbridge. You will get your own one-to-one sessions with a specialist advisor and you can also join an optional group where those with similar experiences support and encourage one another.

As well as being a safe space to express your feelings and get help to manage them, you can find out what treatment is available for someone with problematic alcohol or drug use, how to refer your loved one, and how to develop healthy boundaries and self-care techniques. We also signpost to other local services for additional support.”

Via R3 is based at the 1st Floor, Ilford Chambers, 11 Chapel Road, Ilford, IG1 2DR. To find out more:

☎ 0300 303 4612 or ✉ R3@viaorg.uk

“We need more public toilets.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Vitamin D

Vitamin D helps regulate the amount of calcium and phosphate in the body.

These nutrients are needed to keep bones, teeth and muscles healthy.

It's important to take vitamin D as you may have been indoors more than usual this year.

You should take 10 micrograms (400 IU) of vitamin D a day between October and early March to keep your bones and muscles healthy.



Vitamin D helps to keep you healthy

Find out more on the NHS website. ➔ [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](#)
- ➔ One Place East - Talking Newsletter, October 2023 ➔ [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](#)
- ➔ NHS urges people to get winter jabs with two weeks until online bookings close ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Age UK responds to Ofgem's price cap announcement and the future cost of energy ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Hundreds of patients in hospital with norovirus ahead of winter ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Homelessness social work role valuable but rare, isolated and temporarily funded ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS cancer bus tours country as over two in five wouldn't visit GP about possible symptom ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ New autism support launched for families and carers across England ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ 10% pay rise for thousands of care workers as part of national living wage rise ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Social care staff carrying out tasks previously undertaken by NHS, without extra funding ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Hundreds of thousands of NHS patients to be offered the chance to travel for treatment ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Women urged to take up NHS cervical screening invitations ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Fast-track programme to train 320 more social workers in £19m contract extension ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ New NHS software to improve care for millions of patients ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS dementia diagnosis rates at three-year high ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Giant lung roadshow tours England as most people ignore early lung cancer symptoms ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Pharmacy reforms to bring new services to the high street ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Most councils rated good for adult social care in CQC pilot assessments ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Artificial intelligence to help boost NHS winter response and prevent avoidable admissions ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ One-year waits reduce for patients as record demand for NHS emergency care continues ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS mobile testing scheme finds thousands of new cases of liver damage ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Women set to benefit from 'repurposed' NHS drug to prevent breast cancer ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS virtual wards to treat thousands of patients with heart failure at home ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Age UK's response to the Government's Autumn Statement ➔ [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