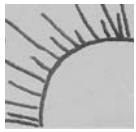


Issue 1 Summer 2009

Welcome – and get in touch



Welcome to the first newsletter of the merged Age Concern Kensington & Chelsea (incorporating Sixty Plus). We've tried to combine what you've told us you like about both publications but this is early days, so we'd be grateful for any comments or suggestions.

If you would like to get a bit more involved in the newsletter, you could join a small editorial group that meets before each edition to suggest topics of interest; and also spend some time proofreading and editing.

If that's something that you might be interested in, please contact **Sarah Fried** on **020 7471 5551** and she'll make sure that you are invited to the next meeting.

We're also always willing to consider contributions,

whether of a factual or a creative nature.

Whether you are more used to the Sixty Plus format or Age Concern's, you'll notice that we've organised the articles in a slightly different way.

Nevertheless, you'll find inside this edition some useful information about health and well-being, money matters and tips about staying safe, as well as the usual reminders about the full range of services now available through our united organisation.

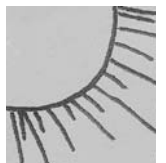
You will also find an insert with the names and telephone numbers of key staff, so please do get in touch if you would like to find out more. There are just too many of us to fit into one office, but contacting us shouldn't be a problem.

Getting together

Continuing the Age Concern tradition, an Ordinary General Meeting of friends and supporters will be held on Thursday, July 22nd, 2pm till 4pm at London Lighthouse, 111–117 Lancaster Road, W11. At this meeting, I'll be giving an update on the new organisation and answering any questions.

We'll also hear from the Kensington & Chelsea LINK – a community led initiative, which will help you to make local health and social care services better.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me with any queries, comments or suggestions and enjoy a sunny summer.



Cynthia Dize
Chief Officer

You may know Nick already ...



You can get advice from Nick (above) – or Menghis (photo next issue)

My name is Nick Parsons, some of you may know me already as I have been working at Age Concern Kensington & Chelsea for over two years answering your questions and helping you to solve your problems. We recently got

funding from City Bridge to provide additional help to older people in Kensington and Chelsea. We can now help residents to get the right benefits, resolve issues with utility bills and access services – for example, health, social care and housing services.

Recently, one lady of 89, who lives on her own in Chelsea, contacted us upset that she no longer had a social worker. She was also distressed by a mice/rat problem and money issues. Through my help she has now got an advocate who is liaising with Social Services on her behalf, has been visited by pest control and is having her entitlement to welfare benefits reviewed.

Contact me on **020 7471 5551** if you need assistance to access services or get the benefits that you are entitled to.

... but you won't know Menghis ...

Menghis T'medhin joined us in April. He is the first point of contact for the Charles House based Information and Advice service and can help you find answers to your questions or solutions to your problems. Contact **020 7471 5551**, email information@ackc.org.uk or drop into one of our surgeries:

- Kensington Town Hall (Hornton Street, W8 7NX) on the first and third Wednesday of each month, 10am–1pm
- A Wayfinders surgery (see details below)

Wayfinders – taking information into the community

Our **Wayfinders** project, featured in the last newsletter, is up and running and you can already speak to someone face-to-face about any question or problem that you have at any one of the following locations:

- EPICS, Westway Centre, 2–4 Malton Road, W10 5UP on Thursdays, 11am–3pm
- Emperors Gate Health Centre, Emperors Gate, SW7 4HJ on Thursdays, 10am–12.30pm
- World's End Health Centre, 529 King's Road, SW10 0UD on Fridays, 10am–5pm
- 1 Thorpe Close, W10 5XL.

Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm

There is no shortage of voluntary and statutory organisations dedicated to helping older people in this area, but how many are aware of the full range of services and how to access them? What about those who experience barriers such as language, culture or disability? Wayfinders builds on Age Concern Kensington & Chelsea's mainly telephone-based advice service by taking information into a wide variety of community venues – eventually you might find us in supermarkets and parks, as well as health and day

centres. This will ensure that older people can make use of information and services. The aim is to improve health, well-being and independence – addressing all the issues that add 'life to years' – from getting help with benefits or other financial matters and finding a GP or a dentist, to opportunities for socialising and keeping fit.

Wayfinders volunteers intend to spread the word ... for more information contact Redi Kowa at redi.kowa@ackc.org.uk or phone **020 8964 8624**).

Age Concern products and services

We are pleased to announce that Sally Price has recently joined Age Concern Kensington and Chelsea as an Arranger for the Age Concern product range, to include home insurance, travel insurance, pre-paid funeral plans and energy services. All of these products are designed for the over 50s and their sale helps generate revenue to assist with the charitable

activities offered locally by Age Concern Kensington and Chelsea.

Please telephone Sally on **020 7471 5555** to discuss the products and services offered and to obtain a quotation.

Age Concern Kensington & Chelsea is an Appointed Representative of Age Concern Enterprises Limited which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority for mediation insurance (311438). Age

Concern Enterprises Ltd is registered in England and Wales No. 3156159. Registered Office: Astral House, 1268 London Road, SW16 4ER. Age Concern Enterprises Ltd is a trading company of Age UK and donates any profits to that registered charity. Age Concern England (charity number 261794) has merged with Help the Aged (charity number 272786) to form Age UK, a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England: registered office address 207–221 Pentonville Road, London, N1 9UZ, company number 6825798, registered charity number 1128267.

‘Opening Doors’ project

Older lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (OLGBT) people often fear identifying themselves and accessing the support they might need. We recognise that older people have lived a large part of their lives in less liberal times and their experiences have made them understandably wary and cautious.

We also know that more OLGBT people may suffer from mental health problems and isolation as compared to heterosexual people, and we are keen to offer services that will enable people in this group to come forward in confidence.

The **Opening Doors in Central London** project, a collaboration between the five Age Concerns across London (including us), offers specialist OLGBT services, such as advice and support, social activities,

befriending, events, computer classes, exercise classes and volunteering opportunities.

There is an **Opening Doors Information Fair** on Friday 4th September, between 1pm–4pm at the Soho Centre for Health & Care, 1 Frith Street, W1V 5DH. Attendees will have the chance to find out about OLGBT support services available across London, which can advise or assist with issues such as housing options, community safety, health and lots more! Refreshments will be provided. For further information on the Fair or about the project, contact Debbie Neil on **020 7121 3331** or Nick Maxwell on **020 7121 3335**.



AGE Camden
Hackney
Islington
Kensington & Chelsea
Westminster
Opening Doors in Central London

Your voice matters

New Citizens Voice is hosting a special event for people from all migrant communities living, working or studying in the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, at Kensington Town Hall on Monday, 15th June, 10am to 2.30pm.

Find out how the government works and understand the political system, learn how you can play a more active role in the community and why your voice matters! We will address topics such as how the country is governed at national and local level and discuss social concerns of particular relevance to you. There will be prominent guest speakers, as well as plenty of opportunities for discussion. All participants are invited to a special guided tour of Parliament. Book your place by contacting Maria Leyva on **020 7751 5829** or emailing maria.leyva@newcitizensvoice.com.

Our day out at Westfield



A small group from our **Dementia Outreach Service** visited the new Westfield Centre at Shepherds Bush on 18th March 2009 and can be seen here enjoying a coffee in the spacious atrium. Whilst there, they were able to visit a photo exhibition 'Fabulous People, Fabulous Lives' at the Getty Images Gallery – an opportunity to recognise and reminisce about some famous faces of stage and screen from 50 years ago.

Group members commented on how much they enjoyed socialising and seeing the latest addition to West London's shopping opportunities, even if they confined themselves to window shopping! Future outings are planned to exhibitions and galleries. If you are someone with a memory issue and are interested, please contact us on **020 7471 5548**. We are looking forward to seeing you at our next fun day out.

Hulya Carson



Mobility Forum

We are aware of many different reasons why it is hard for some of our members to get out and about as much as they would like.

These include difficulties with using public transport due to disability; lack of confidence in going out alone; lack of awareness regarding disabled transport services (like dial-a-ride, community transport and the taxicard scheme); lack of street seating and public toilets; and insufficient time given to cross the road using a zebra crossing.

Advice and assistance

As well as often providing advice and practical assistance with these problems – helping members to identify appropriate services, complete forms and providing escorts – we also regularly attend a Local Mobility Forum, where representatives from the council, transport providers and voluntary organisations such as us, meet to try and make the local area as accessible as possible.

We have contributed to a number of success stories – from the creation of a new bus route to the change in the rules for the use of the taxicard. **If you have difficulties getting out and about, please contact us and tell us why.**

We can provide one to one advice and assistance or raise the issues at the forum.

Sarah Fried

A helping hand

Vitalise Homecare is a tailored package of personal care for people with disabilities or long-term health conditions. It can be for as little as a few hours a week or as much as 24 hours a day. Trained and supervised care staff provide personal care – help with washing, bathing, dressing, and other intimate tasks essential to staying healthy and feeling good.

For many older people living alone, one of their greatest fears is no longer being able to cope at home. This is why Vitalise came up with the concept of Homeshare. This is an innovative solution for older

vitalise
home services

or isolated people who need that little bit of extra support to continue living at home. Vitalise carefully selects volunteer homesharers who provide live-in domestic support and companionship in return for accommodation and some free time of their own. The arrangement is constantly monitored by Vitalise to ensure that both parties benefit from the relationship.

Through its Homecare and Homeshare schemes, Vitalise



is making a real difference to the quality of life of hundreds of disabled, frail and older Londoners each year.

For a free consultation or a friendly chat call Vitalise Home Services on **020 7376 3545**, email homeservices@vitalise.org.uk or visit www.vitalise.org.uk

Memory loss – one day at a time

One Day at a Time is a series of talks for people with dementia or their relatives and friends. These regular meetings are held in the Central Library Meeting Room next to Kensington Town Hall, in Hornton Street W8.

Meetings are usually **on the last Thursday of the month** from 11am to 1pm (arrive from 10.45am onwards for light refreshments).

Assessing memory

The next meeting will be held on 25th June and will be a presentation from Dr Gupta who is a specialist registrar at St Charles Hospital. Dr Gupta will

be talking about new ways of assessing memory that improve the detection of dementia. These new developments provide an opportunity to improve the provision of health and social care.

Support group

There is an informal support group for carers, families and friends of people with memory difficulties, Alzheimer's and other types of dementia at Central Library Meeting Room, next to Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, W8 where you can meet people to share your experiences and learn coping

strategies. The meetings take place between 11.30am and 1pm (refreshments from 11.15am). The next few dates are 16th and 30th July, 6th and 20th August, and 3rd and 17th September.

If you want more information about either of these meetings, if you are interested in this subject but are not able to attend or if you are worried about your own memory or the memory of someone you know, contact the **Dementia Development Team** on **020 7598 4648/4664**.

Carers' strategy

The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea and NHS Kensington & Chelsea launched their joint Carers' Strategy on Tuesday, 9th June to coincide with carers' week.

The strategy has been developed through consultation with carers and organisations working with carers. It outlines priorities for the next five years, and will assist service providers and partners to plan for service developments which will be needed to support carers. Carers will be able to identify how the needs they expressed in consultation events have been translated into future actions.

Detailed action plan

The detailed action plan linked to the strategy will be developed, implemented and continuously monitored by the Carers' Joint Strategy Group, where carers are directly represented.

The strategy aims to:

- raise the profile and status of carers
- ensure carers obtain the recognition they deserve
- provide services tailored to carers' individual needs and circumstances
- enable carers of all ages to have more choice and control over decisions that affect them.

The strategy recognises the

need to identify carers as early as possible, so that tailored ongoing support can be provided which can also help prevent crises occurring. Working links with GPs will also be developed so that carers can be referred onto relevant services. Carers' services will be publicised more widely to ensure easy access to information about their rights to support and benefits.

Carers' Forum

A Carers' Forum will be established to encourage carers' involvement in service planning and development, including the personalisation agenda, to promote more flexible and tailored services to suit individual carer's needs.

Carers' health and well-being will be promoted with the availability of annual health checks, health-related information for carers will be developed, hospital discharge arrangements will be improved and health professionals will be better informed about how to support carers. Time off from caring for example through access to leisure, education and training will be developed to fit around the needs of the carer, to ensure they have a life outside of caring. For more information about this strategy or to find out how you can get support, contact **Laxmi Jamdagni** on **020 7361 3926** / laxmi.jamdagni@rbkc.gov.uk

Scooter loan scheme

The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea funds the Out and About Scooter Scheme, which is run by Westway Community Transport. The scheme enables people who have difficulty walking to borrow a mobility scooter for all or part of the day. Members are able to maintain their independence, go shopping, meet friends for lunch or spend time in the park (it is a great mood booster and has a real effect on well being). The scooters are available from a variety of locations and people can choose the option that best suits them. Using a scooter is easier than most people think and training is provided. For more information on this scheme, contact **020 8960 8774**. This is only one of a variety of schemes aimed at helping local residents with mobility problems; for more information contact the Accessible Transport Team on **020 7361 2390** or contact Age Concern on **020 7471 5551**.

Excellent results

Jorge Moreno, who may already be known to many of you as he has worked for Age Concern's Care Services for a long time, has recently been awarded his BA in Social Work from the Open University. Jorge studied for the degree whilst still working at the day job, and we send him our hearty congratulations. Jorge is currently employed as our Care Services Coordinator.

In a severe heatwave you may get dehydrated and your body may overheat. If you already have a heart or respiratory problem, this may make your symptoms worse. Additionally, it can cause heat exhaustion or heatstroke. Keeping yourself cool will reduce the risk of illness. If you start to feel unwell, it is important to seek medical advice as soon as possible.

Heat exhaustion symptoms include headaches, dizziness, nausea and vomiting, muscle weakness or cramps, pale skin and a high temperature. Heatstroke can develop if heat exhaustion is left untreated, but it can also occur without warning. Symptoms include headaches, nausea, an intense thirst, sleepiness, hot, red and dry skin, a sudden rise in temperature, confusion, aggression, convulsions and loss of consciousness.

What should you do?

Keep out of the heat

- If a heat wave is forecast, try and plan your day so that you stay out of the heat.
- If you can, avoid going out in the hottest part of the day (11am–3pm).
- If you must go out, stay in the shade. Wear a hat and light, loose-fitting clothes, preferably cotton. If you will be outside for some time, take plenty of water with you.

Stay cool

- A loose, cotton, damp cloth or scarf on the back of the neck, or spraying or splashing your

Heatwave

face and the back of your neck with cold water several times a day can help keep you cool.

- Stay inside, in the coolest rooms in your home, as much as possible.
- Reduce heat from sunlight coming through the windows. External shading, such as shutters, is best. Metal blinds and dark curtains may absorb heat and make the room warmer – it is best to use pale curtains or reflective material.
- Indoor and outdoor plants will help keep your home cool.
- Take cool showers or baths.

Drink regularly

- Drink regularly even if you are not thirsty – water or fruit juice are best.
- Avoid alcohol, tea and coffee – they make dehydration worse.
- Eat as you normally would. Try to eat more cold food, particularly salads and fruit, as they contain water.

Seek advice if you have any concerns

- Contact your doctor, a pharmacist or NHS Direct (**0845 4647**) if you are worried about your health during a heat wave, especially if you are taking medication, if you feel unwell or have any unusual symptoms.

- Watch for cramp in your arms, legs or stomach, feelings of mild confusion, weakness or problems sleeping.
- If you have these symptoms, rest for several hours, keep cool and drink water or fruit juice. Seek medical advice if they get worse or persist.

Your choice of hospital

Since April 2008, if your GP says you should see a specialist, you can choose to go to any hospital in England, including many private and independent sector hospitals. You can choose the hospital with the best reputation or shortest waiting times – or simply the most convenient. It may sometimes not be possible to have a choice when referred to mental health services or where speed of access is important, such as suspected stroke, heart attack or cancer.

Patients can go to the NHS Choices website at www.nhs.uk, put in the post code where they live or where they would like to be treated. The website will show them all the hospitals in that area – both NHS and private. Patients can also compare information on the NHS Choices website such as individual services offered, infection rates, parking and travel. If you don't have access to the internet you can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on **020 8962 4547** or discuss this with your GP. When you have chosen your hospital you can book it through your GP. Remember it's your choice to suit your needs!

Health Wise news

My Memories

Welcome to 'My Memories', a new project designed to enhance memory services and delivered by the voluntary sector in the community. 'My Memories' aims to raise awareness about memory difficulties, dementia and preventive measures through Ageing Well sessions. There will also be more support for people with dementia and their carers, including outings, workshops and a 'My Memories' Café.

Ageing well

At Ageing Well sessions we learn about preventive measures, play memory games, share tips on dealing with memory problems and learn about healthy ageing. The first Ageing Well sessions will begin in June at the Brompton Library and there will be further sessions at New Horizons in July. Transport may be available for people in SW3 or SW5 who are unable to use public transport.

My Memories Café

We are currently visiting dementia cafés in London to see what might work in this area. The 'My Memories Café' will be a chance for people with dementia and their family members and friends to meet over coffee. We hope to start the 'My Memories' Café in the Autumn, so please get in touch if there are any talks or activities you would like to suggest.

Arthritis seminars

The quarterly arthritis seminars are designed to provide information to help people manage their arthritis. See the listing on this page.

Nutrition talks

As some people get older they may lose weight unexpectedly or they may become deficient in certain nutrients. We are planning nutrition talks from the dietetics team which will cover why this happens, what you can do about it and general healthy eating.

Exercise at home

Did you know that more than 70% of people over 75 achieve less than 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity per week?

If you do not feel that you are ready to attend an exercise class but you still want to get more active, why not learn chair based exercise? We have trained volunteers who can come to your home and teach you!

Contact Lak on 020 8969 9105 if you would like to book a place at a talk, if you want more information on any of these projects, if you are interested in volunteering or if you would like us to arrange a talk on a particular topic that isn't covered here.

Talks and events

Tuesday 16th June, 2–3.30pm

Adapting your Home

Age Concern, 1 Thorpe Close, W10 5XL

Every Thursday starting June 18th until July 23rd, 2–3.30pm

Ageing Well

Brompton Library, 210 Old Brompton Road, SW5 0BS

Tuesday 23rd June, 2–3.30pm

Funeral Planning

Age Concern, 1 Thorpe Close, W10 5XL

Every Wednesday starting 1st July until 5th August, 2–3.30pm

Ageing Well

New Horizons, Guinness Trust Estate, Cadogan St, SW3 2PF

Monday 13th July, 2.30–4.00pm

Nutrition Talk

Age Concern, 1 Thorpe Close, W10 5XL

Wednesday 15th July, 11–12.00pm

Nutrition Talk

Pepper Pot, 1A Thorpe Close, W10 5XL

Monday 20th July, 2.30–4pm

Nutrition Talk

South of the borough (tbc)

Wednesday 9th September 2.00–3.30

Management Strategies and Arthritis

St Mary Abbots Centre, Vicarage Gate, W8 4HN

Thursday 10th September 2–3.30pm

Older People and the Environment

Age Concern, 1 Thorpe Close, W10 5XL

Lak Gill

Dental care and charges

Sixty Plus held a talk in March on dental care in the borough. We learned some interesting facts at the session about what you should expect from your dentist.

Your dentist should ...

- Explain your treatment options, let you know what can be provided on the NHS or privately and make sure you know how much your NHS and/or private treatment will cost.
- Provide you with a written treatment plan including costs.
- Display a poster about NHS charges in the waiting room.
- Discuss with you how often you need to attend – if you have good oral health it's unlikely you will need a check up every six months.

What should I do?

- Give your dentist as much notice as possible if you have to cancel or change an appointment.
- Request a written treatment plan including costs, read and sign the plan.

- Ask about your oral health and how often you need to go to the dentist.
- Talk to your dentist about the benefits of a treatment, plus any risks that are involved.
- Follow your dentist's advice to prevent tooth decay and gum disease and pay your bill promptly.
- Contact the Patient Advice Liaison service (PALs) on **020 8962 4547** if you are unhappy with the treatment you have received or want to find a dentist accepting patients seeking NHS treatment

How much does it cost?

- **Band 1** £16.50 – examination, diagnosis, preventive advice, X-rays, scale and polish and planning for further treatment. Basic treatment by a hygienist is covered by this band.
- **Band 2** £45.60 – everything in band 1 plus fillings, root canal treatment, or extractions.
- **Band 3** £198.00 – everything in band 1 and 2, plus crowns, dentures, and bridges.

If, within two months of completing a course of treatment, you need

further treatment within the same charge band, or a lower charge band – for example, an additional filling – you do not have to pay anything extra

For dental treatment when your surgery is closed, call the Dental Emergency Service on **020 8867 1411**. They are open 6pm–10pm on weekdays and 9am–10pm on weekends and bank holidays. If they establish a need for emergency work to be done, then there will be a charge of £16.20 for this. If you require follow up from your dentist after emergency treatment then they will charge you separately as above.

Am I entitled to free NHS treatment?

Denture repairs, removal of stitches and writing out a prescription are free for everyone.

You are eligible to receive free services from your NHS dentist if, when the treatment starts, you need to receive Pension Credit Guarantee Element (you will need to show proof). Some help with NHS costs may be available if you are on a low income; complete the HC1 form, which you can get from your dentist, to establish if you are eligible.

Mental Health Forum

The Borough Community Relations Advisory Group will be holding an annual forum about local mental health services on **Tuesday 23rd June** from 6.30 to 8pm at the Council Chamber, Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, W8.

This will be an opportunity to find out more about mental health services in Kensington and Chelsea and to ask any questions that you may have from a panel of speakers from local service providers and decision-makers including the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, NHS Kensington &

Chelsea, and Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust.

To reserve your free place please contact the Community Engagement Team on **020 7598 4633** or email communityengagement@rbkc.gov.uk

More information = more control

If you have an understanding of your condition and its treatment, you'll feel more confident. That means you'll be more able to take care of yourself, possibly spending less time at your GP surgery and more able to take your medicines properly. But it is important to have good, reliable information. Wrong or misleading information can do more harm than good. It can confuse and scare people, raise false hopes and even damage your health further. So where can you get the best information? The following are trustworthy sources.

The internet: NHS Choices (www.nhs.uk) is the main online point of contact for NHS services. It contains clinical information about hundreds of health conditions. Individual **Primary Care Trusts'** (PCTs) websites are a useful source of local information (www.kc-pct.nhs.uk). Health Talk Online (www.healthtalkonline.org) is a website of patients talking about their experiences in their own words. People with various conditions, including cancers, hypertension and allergies, discuss their diagnosis and treatment and share their tips on living with their illness. The site has audio, video and written text. Best Treatments (www.besttreatments.co.uk) lists evidence-based information on different illnesses and conditions. It tells you what works and what doesn't, based on firm research. Doctors use this site as well as patients as the information is reliable,

accurate and up-to-date. You have to pay to use the Best Treatments website directly but you can access the same information free through NHS Direct Online (www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk) or the Boots website (www.askbootshealth.co.uk). The NHS Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) provides information that can help you locate other support services. Contact PALS on **020 8962 4547** or www.pals.nhs.uk

Written information: When you visit your GP, hospital doctor or other healthcare professionals, ask them for patient information leaflets to help you understand more about your condition. Ask them for copies of letters written about you or your test results if you think you would find them helpful. Ask your doctor or nurse if there's a national patient support group, such as Diabetes UK or the British Heart Foundation, for your particular condition. These groups often provide reliable information.

Telephone advice: The NHS Direct helpline on **0845 4647** gives round-the-clock health advice and information from trained nurses. Most patient support groups have a telephone helpline staffed by volunteers, sometimes health professionals. PALS can help you locate other support services. Contact PALS on **020 8962 4547**.

You can also get information such as leaflets, videos and audio tapes, including ones that

focus on a specific illness or service, from many sources. And then there are workshops (see page 8 about our Health Wise project); courses, such as the free Expert Patients Programme (contact Lucy Bryan on **020 8962 4021** or email lucy.bryan@kc-pct.nhs.uk); and self-care support networks and groups (both local and national).

Heart disease

A diagnosis of heart disease can cause a lot of stress. The **Kensington and Chelsea Community Heart Support Service** has two heart support nurse specialists who can help to reduce some of that tension.

They offer specialist monitoring and guidance on how to manage symptoms associated with heart disease. They can give advice on medication, explaining why it is given, what it is for and the importance of taking it. They can provide transport for house-bound people to attend specific hospital outpatients' appointments. They also support families to care for those with a heart problem.

Residents who have been diagnosed with a heart condition are normally referred to the service. But if you want to find out more, then you can refer yourself. Contact Ellen Shata or Leonia Modeste (British Heart Foundation adopted Heart Failure Nurse) on **020 7792 7736** at the Heart Support Office, Colville Health Centre, 51 Kensington Park Road, W11.

Be Head Strong

Dementia Awareness Week is taking place in England and Wales from 5–11 July 2009. This year's theme is '**Be Head Strong**'. It's about being aware of the things you can do to reduce your risk of developing dementia. What people may not know is that the things you can do to protect your heart also reduce your risk of dementia. Dementia is not an inevitable part of ageing and there are steps you can take at any age to help reduce the risk.

Top tips for reducing risk:

1. **Eat healthily** – lots of fruit and vegetables and limit the high-fat, sugary and salty foods.
2. **Get active** – try to exercise for 30 minutes at least five times a week.
3. **Watch your blood pressure and cholesterol** – ask your GP

Healthy homes

Residents of Kensington and Chelsea have been benefiting from warmer, safer homes through the **Healthy Homes scheme**. This provides a single point of contact to help local residents keep warm and well at home and is supported by RBKC, NHS Kensington & Chelsea, Age Concern Kensington & Chelsea (incorporating Sixty Plus), Staying Put and London Warm Zone.

Many people live in homes that are difficult to heat or cannot afford their fuel bills. Even in warmer weather people face

to check these regularly. A healthy diet and regular exercise can help keep you within healthy limits.

4. **Keep a healthy weight** – nearly a quarter of all adults in the UK are obese. Obesity is linked to the development of dementia so it's important to keep in shape.

5. **Don't smoke** – smoking has a very harmful effect on the heart, lungs and blood system.

If you are interested in learning more on how to reduce your risk of developing dementia or about games that keep the memory sharp, come along to our **Ageing Well** sessions. Ageing Well will be taking place at the Brompton Library and New Horizons between now and August. For more information contact Lak on **020 8969 9105**.

high energy bills and may be choosing between heating and eating. Being cold at home increases the risk of illness, particularly bronchitis, asthma, strokes and heart disease.

The Healthy Homes scheme offers information and support to make homes more energy efficient and help people receive the income and benefits they're entitled to, resulting in increases in weekly income of £70–80 in some cases. This helps vulnerable people to stay warm and well at home. If you or someone you know is struggling to pay fuel bills, call Healthy Homes on **0808 202 6204**.

Diabetes support

There are 4,850 people living in Kensington and Chelsea with a diagnosis of diabetes and the Department of Health estimates that 1 million people have it and do not know. It can have catastrophic implications: a greatly increased risk of heart disease, and the leading cause of blindness, kidney failure and non-accident amputations.

But it is not all bad news – **Diabetes UK** is a large charity organisation in England and works hard to ensure that people with diabetes are both supported and informed so that they can take control.

The Community Diabetes Service is starting up a **Diabetes UK support group** locally. The first meeting was on 18th May and the next meeting will be on 22nd June at 6pm, in Kensington Town Hall (Small Hall). Contact Sandra Da Silva (**020 7792 7762** or *diabetes.service@kc-pct.nhs.uk*) if you or someone you know has diabetes and you want to attend the meeting or if you want any further information.

Swine flu

If you have flu-like symptoms and are worried, stay at home. If you can, check your symptoms online at www.nhs.uk or call the information line on **0800 1 513 513**. If you have done this and are still concerned call your GP or NHS Direct (**0845 46 47**).

Always use a tissue to catch your sneezes and wash your hands!

Change to the savings rule for means-tested benefits

From November 2009 the limit on the savings you can have before your Pension Credit (Guarantee Element) is reduced, is to be raised from £6,000 to £10,000. The raising of the savings threshold will also apply to both Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit. The Government estimate that the raised threshold will increase the income of around 540,000 claimants by an average of £4 per week. The increase should occur automatically from autumn 2010 if you are already receiving one of these benefits.

The raising of the savings threshold will also enable some new claimants to receive the Guarantee Element of Pension Credit, and therefore full council tax and housing benefit (unless someone else lives with you who should contribute). Age Concern England estimates that nationally, up to £2.8 billion in Pension Credit is left unclaimed each year by up to 1.8 million pensioners. To make sure you are not one of those missing out; give us a call on **020 7471 5551** to check you are getting all the benefits you are entitled to.

Getting your money

You may struggle to use cash machines or write cheques due to lack of confidence or understanding, or maybe you have a disability that makes this difficult. It can be even more problematic to get access to your money if you are unable to get out, either because of a temporary issue (such as an illness or fear of slipping in icy conditions) or because of more permanent problems.

There are solutions to these problems, ranging from moving your bank, setting up direct debit or standing orders, third party mandates, giving someone 'power of attorney', making someone a permanent agent on your post office card account or setting up a joint account. For more information on options and help to find a solution to your problem, contact us on **020 7471 5551**.

ISA limits increased

In last April's Budget, the Chancellor announced that everyone over 50 years of age will get an increase in their tax-free Individual Savings Account (ISA) allowance. From 6th October 2009, you will be allowed to save up to £10,200 in an ISA – half of which can be

saved in cash. If you are thinking of opening or changing an ISA account, the best advice we can give is simple – shop around. If you want to get advice about savings or investments, call us on **020 7471 5551** to request a copy of our free information sheet.

Lost your account?

Have you ever wondered if you might have an account with a bank or building society that you have forgotten all about? Help is at hand!

A national campaign has started to encourage people to trace their 'lost' or 'dormant' bank or building society accounts to help unearth their money.

In January, the Building Societies Association (BSA) joined forces with NS&I (National Savings and Investments) and the British Bankers' Association (BBA) to launch a dedicated website www.mylostaccounts.org.uk

This has been designed to make searching for lost accounts easier by bringing together the existing schemes from the BBA, the BSA and NS&I.

All enquiries to the national website are collated centrally and circulated to the relevant institutions for checking. You can access this service on behalf or someone else as a nominated representative.

If you cannot access the internet in order to register with this service, then you can contact the following organisations directly: British Bankers' Association – Lost Accounts Manager (020 7216 8909); Building Societies Association – Lost Savings (020 7520 5900); and National Savings and Investments – Tracing Service (0845 964 5000).

Pension Credit recipients who may have paid tax in error on their savings income in the past six years will be contacted by HM Revenue & Customs as part of a taxback campaign. Those in receipt of the guarantee element of Pension Credit will be contacted next autumn in order to encourage them to claim tax back on savings income and, where possible, register to avoid overpaying tax in future. Those

Entitled to a tax rebate?

who do claim are expected to receive an average £200.

Most people in receipt of the Guarantee Element of Pension Credit are below the tax threshold and therefore should NOT be paying any tax on their savings interest. However, unless

you register as a non-tax-payer with your bank or building society, tax will be deducted automatically from your savings. For more information call HM Revenue & Customs on **0845 366 7850**. If you would like a basic guide to income tax allowances for people aged 60 and over, we have a free factsheet entitled 'Income Tax'. Phone **020 7471 5551** and ask for a copy.

Water saving

As a general rule of thumb, if you have more bedrooms than people in your home, you could probably save money by going onto a water meter. Most people in England, Wales and Scotland have the right to have a water meter installed free of charge (exceptions apply if you are in some multiple occupancies). If you request a water meter, your supplier will install it at no cost and you will then be charged for your exact usage. You have the right to ask your water company to switch you back to an unmeasured charge within the first 12 months of installation – so if you find you are not saving

money on your water bills, simply ask to be switched back.

Even if you do have a meter installed there are plenty of ways to reduce your water bill:

- Taking showers instead of baths
- Fix dripping taps
- Get a 'save-a-flush' device for the toilet
- Cut down on the number of times you water the garden

If you aren't eligible for a meter, your water company should offer you an 'assessed charge' where you pay a bill based on an estimate of your water usage, or what other metered customers pay in your area.

SSAFA forces help

With the 125th Anniversary of the organisation on the horizon, it is a good time to remind ourselves that we have our own branch of the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA) in Kensington and Chelsea, staffed by local volunteers.

They are committed to help any member of the armed forces, past or present, territorial or regular, and their families.

They combine a friendly ear with positive help to relieve need, suffering and distress, including help to identify sources of funding.

If you or someone you know is interested, contact John Jacobson on **020 7233 3652** (Tuesdays and Fridays, 10am–12pm).

Richard Finzel

*If you were not a member of the armed forces, then contact Age Concern on **020 7471 5551** to get help to identify sources of financial assistance that may be relevant to you.*

State pension to rise (even if inflation falls)

From April 2010 the basic state pension will be increased by at least 2.5%, regardless of inflation. This is in spite of the expected fall below 2.5% of the Retail Prices Index (RPI), which is used each September to calculate the increase in the state pension for the following April. However, in these uncertain times, should the RPI be greater than 2.5% the state

pension will rise in line with RPI inflation. Age Concern estimates that the real inflation rate for the average pensioner is actually well beyond 2.5%. We all know that the rapidly rising costs of food and energy are far greater than 2.5%. If you are struggling to get by, please give us a call on **020 7471 5551** to ensure you are claiming everything to which you are entitled.

Be wary of doorstep selling

'Doorstep selling' is when someone sells you goods or services in your home or on your doorstep. Every year consumer organisations have to deal with large numbers of complaints about doorstep selling.

It can be a convenient way to buy goods or services, but equally you could be pressurised into buying something you didn't really want or that is not good value for money. 'Doorstep selling' can also be a trick used by distraction burglars to gain access to your property.

Shoddy work

Rogue doorstep sellers often target older people offering to carry out work such as tarmacking, paving, gardening and roofing or similar home maintenance jobs. While the initial price offered might sound tempting, often the finished work is shoddy and the price escalates on completion.

Threatening methods

These types of trader have been known to use threatening and intimidating methods to force people to

pay. If you ever feel threatened or intimidated by the presence of a doorstep seller you should call the police.

Here are some tips:

- DO fit a security chain on your front door and use it every time someone calls.*
- DO keep your front and back door locked, whether you are at home or away.
- DO say 'no thank you' and close the door if it becomes necessary.
- DO consider whether the product is something you want, can afford or really need.
- DO remember that if an offer seems too good to be true, then it probably is.
- DON'T allow a trader into your home if you feel uneasy about doing so.
- DON'T let the trader push you into a snap decision about buying.
- DON'T allow the trader to convince you to buy things you don't want.

- DON'T listen to scare stories about the condition of your property.
- DON'T accept an offer from a trader to drive you to the bank to withdraw money.

If you decide to buy goods or services at the door and the cost is more than £35, you generally have seven days to change your mind and cancel. This is known as the 'cooling off period'.

However, if you proceed with the purchase and the goods or services are not to your satisfaction, your first port of call should be Consumer Direct on **08454 04 05 06**.

If the issue is very complex or involves a criminal offence, your case will be passed onto your local Trading Standards office.

Vince Riviere, RBKC

If you would like a doorchain and spyhole supplied and installed free, ring Age Concern/Sixty Plus on **020 8969 9105.*

Garden Guardians

Garden Guardians update

Grow your own

Forget the 'credit crunch' and welcome to the 'carrot crunch', as the council embarks on a new initiative, the 'Community Kitchen Garden'. The project is being organised by the North Kensington Environment Project and led by the manager Terry Oliver. The NKEP is part of the council's programme to tackle 'grot spots' around the borough – pieces of derelict land that the Council has spruced up. One of these was in the Elkstone Road, corner of Golborne Road. We were involved in the clearing and planting and continue to assist with the upkeep.

The project aims to develop under-used plots of land in North Kensington and transform them into community gardens, where local residents can grow their own carrots, spuds, radical radishes, the kids' favourite cabbage and sprouts, as well as raspberries and other delicious fruits. The project is just beginning and some sites are still to be confirmed. Possibles so far are: Lancaster West Estate, Winterbourne House (Portland Road), Avondale Park Gardens, Hudson House (Cornwall Crescent), Treadgold House, Clydesdale House, Clement House (not confirmed).

Other non-estate based sites being explored are:

- St. Charles Hospital (not yet confirmed by the NHS);
- St. Quintin's Avenue – (not yet confirmed by NHS);



- Portland Road Open space.

The environmental charity Groundwork has been appointed to work with residents on designing, creating and providing ongoing garden support. There will be advice and training workshops, cook and eat sessions, and trips to 'pick your own' farms and Capel Manor. There will be weekly sessions at all the new gardens.

The allocation and working of each site will be dealt with on an individual site by site basis; sites on estates will only be open to residents within the estates. The allocation of non-estate based plots still needs to be confirmed.

I attended one of the first kitchen workshops at St. Mark's Park on 13th May. It was 'make your own herb basket to take home'. There was a large turnout, or rather turn up, as many residents descended on the park. There was a Groundworks gardener on hand to offer help and advice and 35 baskets to be filled. Every one was packed full of herbs by eager residents. The event was a success and all the local residents seemed keen to be involved in future developments.

The council officer in charge is Terry Oliver, North Kensington Environment project manager, **020 7341 5684**. So get involved and grow healthy food and munch your way out of the credit crunch. I'm looking forward to a Lancaster West cucumber sandwich in the summer.

Landshare

Another new healthy food-growing initiative is being launched by Channel 4 and some celebrity chefs, called Landshare. People who want to grow their own vegetables, but don't have land to do so, connect with people who have land to grow on, but don't have the time. A network will be established whereby people can exchange ideas and help each other to produce and access locally grown crops. The website is <http://landshare.channel4.com> and Garden Guardians has registered an interest.

And if you need a bit of help with your own green-fingered work, our garden guardians volunteers are still here to help – to keep the weeds down, pruning, planting, window boxes and any other help you may need. Contact John Nugent on **020 8969 9105** to find out more.

Finally, thanks to all our volunteers: Peter, Chieh, Angela, Tamila, Viviana, Carey, Margaret, Martin, Alan, Jean, David, Catherine, Dino, and anyone I have forgotten, thanks for your help in making your area a 'bloomin' better place to be'!

John Nugent
Garden Guardians Co-ordinator

Volunteers

A fire danger at home?

At Age Concern (incorporating Sixty Plus), whenever we get a new person wanting support or services at home, we organise a home visit to assess their needs and how we can provide the most appropriate support. These home visits are always a very good time for learning, raising awareness and getting in touch with the reality of the day to day issues that face our members.

A couple of months ago, I visited Miss X. Everything went well and the client is now receiving a volunteer escort service from us.

We discussed fire safety during our chat and Miss X told me how she got in trouble with fire. One day she was at home and noticed that there was a smoky smell in the flat. She saw smoke coming from the bedroom and she was shocked when she saw her curtains in flames. The report from the fire brigade said that the fire was due to direct sunlight hitting a magnifying lens and then being reflected back onto one small point on the curtains!

A few weeks later during another home visit, I noticed a similar

situation (direct sunlight onto a magnifying lens). I mentioned Miss X's case to the new user and she immediately removed the magnifying lens from the area of direct sunlight.

So, just keep an eye if you have a magnifying lens at home and be aware of not placing it in direct sunlight.

Contact the Fire Brigade on **0800 28 44 28**, if you would like someone to visit you at home and offer you personal fire safety advice. They can also fit a free smoke alarm if required.

Tasio Cabello
Volunteer and Community Services Manager

Sponsored cyclists criss-cross Britain

Not one, but two lots of intrepid cyclists will be donating their time and considerable muscle power, to support Age Concern and Sixty Plus by cycling from John O'Groats to Land's End (in Keith Stirling's case) and from Land's End to John O'Groats in Ben Long and his friend Peter Jund's case in July and August.

Keith, who is also Chair of the Wornington Green Residents' Association, is a veteran long-distance cyclist, but our Inter-generational Project Worker, Ben, and Peter are taking up the challenge for the first time.

So as usual, it's youth and experience in support of Age Concern and Sixty Plus. Many thanks to them all!

If you would like to sponsor the



Above left: Keith Stirling – riding north to south. Above right: Ben Long and Peter Jund – riding south to north.

Age Concern/Sixty Plus cyclists, donations can be sent to Age Concern Kensington and Chelsea, 1 Thorpe Close, W10



5XL. Or you can donate online at www.justgiving.com/benlong and www.justgiving.com/keithstirling

Volunteers

Intergenerational projects: the volunteer's wage

For those of you who are visited by a young volunteer, you can see from Jeremy's article that they get just as much as they give ...

"When we hear the word 'volunteer', the next thought is usually 'no pay'. In a financial crisis, doing work for no money seems ridiculous. However, a placement with Age Concern Kensington & Chelsea and Sixty Plus usually yields something worth more than a few pounds.

Whether you're involved in the Reading Project, the IT Project or English Language Support, young volunteers can gain or develop a broad range of personal skills and qualities, making this an invaluable addition to your UCAS form. Attending on a weekly basis demonstrates your commitment to an extra-curricular activity and

your organisational skills in moulding the visit to your timetable.

While you are visiting a much older person who may be visually impaired or may not be so fluent in English, communication skills quickly develop. By extension, you also learn prudence (thinking carefully before acting). All of this could be the deciding factor on your UCAS form, the qualities that make you stand out from the crowd!

The scheme also provides the opportunity to forge relationships with both members and other volunteers. During your weekly visits, you easily find yourself forming a relationship with the older person, learning from them as they learn from you.

However, you may also visit with a partner which allows you to befriend someone who you

might not normally speak to, as was the case with me and my partner. You may also meet up with other volunteers and share experiences at larger events such as the annual Sight Village Exhibition.

Finally, for those of you who are involved in all sorts of extra-curricular activities, volunteering for Age Concern and Sixty Plus can be used for the 'voluntary' section of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. At one hour a week, the Intergenerational Projects are perfect for anyone, whether you are going for Bronze, Silver or Gold!

All this and more is available at Age Concern, Kensington & Chelsea. If you're interested, get in touch with Ben Long on 020 8969 9105 and remember that volunteers do get paid after all!"

Jeremy Chiew

Reading Project Volunteer

Weekend help available

As most of you know, one of the main services we offer at Age Concern Kensington and Chelsea (incorporating Sixty Plus) is escorting – to appointments, to the bank, to the post office or just for a walk. We also provide volunteers to give you practical help with small jobs around the house and help with gardening.

The majority of the requests made by members are for these services on weekdays and we get very few requests on weekends. But at the moment

we have a number of volunteers available for helping on Saturdays and Sundays.

Now that the weather is getting warmer, if you feel like going for a walk at the weekend and need a volunteer to escort you, or if you need help to take your curtains down, hang a picture on the wall or help with gardening, give us a ring on **020 8969 9105** and let us know in advance.

Tasio Cabello

Volunteer and Community Service Manager

Volunteers wanted

Age Concern Kensington and Chelsea (incorporating Sixty Plus) is proud to have volunteers of all ages contributing to the organisation. Whether you're a student or in your 90s, age is not a barrier.

So if you'd like to know what you might contribute, please give Tasio a ring on **020 8969 9105**. It's never too late to make a difference.

What you, the readers, say ...

Hints and tips submitted by readers

Nordic Diet

First we were told of the benefits of the Mediterranean diet, but now, it is claimed, there is one better. It is called the Nordic diet and it's meant to be even healthier. In the Nordic diet we are advised to use rapeseed oil as it makes an excellent alternative to olive oil. It is suggested that we eat berries such as blueberries and vegetables such as speciality cabbages and Brussels sprouts as they contain high levels of Vitamin K, which helps to build strong bones.

Other features of the diet include eating rye bread as an alternative to bread made from wheat, eating more fish and eating 'little and often'. Scandinavians have the lowest obesity in Europe and live longer than most other nations in the world. Good reasons to give the goodness of Nordic fare a try.

PO service proving authenticity

Do any of your readers need to send copies of original documents to any institution as proof that they are the person who they say they

are? These signed and certified copies are normally done by lawyers, doctors and other professionals. I have just found out a new more convenient and cheaper service is being offered by the main Post Offices. They charge £7 for up to three copies, to certify it as an original, upon production of both the photocopy and the original document. It is important that the wording on the certification should include: "This is a true copy of the original (document) which I have seen" and where relevant: "The photograph is a true likeness of the holder". You may blank out any information that is not relevant, for example, if you send a copy of a utility bill, they do not need to know how much your bill was.

In order to use this facility, identity documents must be in your current name. You can't use this service if you're in the process of changing your name. Furthermore, authorities who deal with welfare benefits, such as the Pension Service or the Council, will generally want to see original documents. So before using this useful service, check with the recipient of your documents that Post Office identity check will be acceptable.

Hints and tips

Smile and live longer

The world's oldest person died this week at the age of 130. Recently, when she was visited at the flat where she lived, she was asked what was the secret of her longevity? **She put it down to her sense of humour.**

Vitamin D

Vitamin D battles prostate cancer, the disease that kills thousands of men in the UK every year. A study by Imperial College of London showed that a daily dose of Vitamin D reduces the PSA levels that help to keep a healthy prostate. Vitamin D is found naturally in sunlight, its main source. Take a walk in the park when the sun is out to let the body produce the vitamin, which is also known as the sunshine vitamin. Vitamin D is also found in food such as oily fish (salmon) egg yolk, liver, bread, cereals and milk.

Any opinion expressed on this page is personal to the author and does not necessarily reflect the opinions of Age Concern Kensington & Chelsea

Beyond New Horizons

New Horizons has now been providing opportunities for fun and learning to local residents over 50 for more than a year and a half. Many of you have, no doubt, visited the centre to enjoy one of the over 40 weekly classes and activities, to socialise or meet with friends over lunch or tea, or to take advantage of one of the many alternative therapies on offer. A wide variety of classes that challenge the body, tickle the brain cells, and inspire creativity ensures that the centre, which is open weekdays from 9.30 am to 4.00 pm, bustles with activity.

With rooms in the centre fully booked, New Horizons is now reaching even more people by offering classes and activities at other local venues around Chelsea. Like the classes in the centre, New Horizons classes in the community are taught by top notch professionally trained tutors, who are used to working with older people of all levels of mobility and fitness. They also often have the added advantage of being less crowded and, in many cases, closer to home or easier to get to.

The **Kensington and Chelsea Sports and Physical Activity Network (CSPAN)**, through their REACH project, are funding

eight different New Horizons physical activity classes in venues around World's End, Earl's Court and King's Road. Some, such as Latin Dance and Street/Modern Dance, complement classes at the centre, while others offer a more specialised opportunity to get moving. Ladies can let their hair down in the women only **Salsa class** on Monday afternoons at the Chelsea Theatre or the women only **Yoga class** on Thursday mornings at Cremorne sheltered club room in Milmans Street.

A new class of particular relevance to many older individuals is **Exercising with Arthritis**. This chair based class focuses on safe and effective exercise for anyone who has joint or mobility problems. Students work at their own pace to strengthen muscles, loosen joints, and improve flexibility and there is plenty of opportunity for individual advice and attention. The class meets every Thursday from 2.15–3.15 pm at Sybil Thorndike Casson House in Kramer Mews, SW5. Kramer Mews is located across from the Brompton Cemetery just off Old Brompton Road. The cost is £1.25 per session.

In addition to exercise and other physical activities, New

Horizons runs several social groups in the community. The Tuesday Brompton and Wednesday Cremorne Groups meet weekly for speakers and discussions on issues of topical and local interest, travel, health and more, while members of the Monday Club (not really a club and open to anyone) enjoy quizzes, bingo and relaxed conversation.

To round out New Horizons' presence in the community, there are two art classes, both held on Thursdays: the Lewis Art Group works in oils, water-colours and acrylics under the tutelage of a professional artist and Social Art Group members work on an array of individual projects including needlework and sketching. Both classes include a well deserved tea break.

All New Horizons classes, whether held at the centre or at other local venues, have a nominal charge, which is usually £1.25–£1.75 per class. If you have difficulty using public transport, assistance is available to help you get to your chosen class or activity.

For more information on New Horizons activities or travel assistance, ring **020 7590 8970** or drop in to New Horizons, Guinness Trust Estate, Cadogan Street SW3 2PF, Monday to Friday 9.30–4.00pm.

Lily Ostasiewicz

Activities + Leisure

Intergenerational drama – Acting up this summer

If you have an interest in the theatre, acting, dancing or music, you are invited to attend our three-week drama project.

Working with a professional theatre company and local young people you will help devise, rehearse and perform a play. In the past **Acting Up** has performed at the Electric Cinema on Portobello Road and other local venues.

The project will run from Monday 20th July until Friday 7th August. There will be daily sessions, initially for a couple of hours, but this could increase as we near the date of the performance.

This schedule will give you an opportunity to really work on the



aspect of the theatre which appeals to you, as well as offering an opportunity to get to know some young people from Holland Park School.

Please call Ben at Age Concern K&C on **020 8969 9105** for more information or to register your interest.

Over 50 with time on your hands?

Open Age has lots of stimulating activities for retired people to enjoy. These include art, theatre, poetry, dance, singing, music appreciation, exercise, tai chi, yoga, pilates, book clubs, discussion groups, languages, trips out, computers, philosophy, badminton, quiz evenings, history/interest groups, social groups and many one-off events.

If you would like to attend some of these classes but do not know how, or would like some help getting started, then the Link-Up project could benefit you. Chris, the Link-Up worker can help if you:

- Need transport to and from a venue
- Would like to know more about Open Age Activities
- Would like someone to go with you the first time or first few times
- Want to know more about what services are on offer for you in the local community

Chris can visit you at home for a chat to talk through your needs and wishes. Contact him on **020 8964 1900**.

Book Break

Do you like hearing stories and poems? Do you need some time for yourself? Do you like to chat to others over a cup of tea?

At **Book Break**, you will hear a reading while you relax and enjoy the experience. It is a small friendly group of people who like listening to stories and poems, and discussing what they have read. The groups are at:

- Brompton Library (210 Old Brompton Road, SW5) on Tuesdays, 11am to 12.30pm
- Kensal Library (20 Golborne Road, W10) on Wednesdays, 10am to 11.30am
- Latymer Centre (116 Bramley Road, W10) on Thursdays, 1.30pm to 3pm

You can turn up on the day or you can phone Megg or Emily on **020 7341 0729** / *bibliotherapy@rbkc.gov.uk* to find out more details.

Dance in W10

Would you like to stretch your mind and body at a relaxed class suitable for all abilities?

The **Language of Dance Centre** has started a class at the Latymer Christian Centre, 116 Bramley Road, W10 on Friday mornings in term time.

Call Mary on **020 8969 2290** for more information.

Activities + Leisure

21st June–19th July

Earl's Court Festival

The **Earl's Court Festival** is an annual event organised by the Earl's Court Community Trust. The overall aim of the festival is to strengthen the diverse community of Earl's Court by involving and engaging the many groups and people that make up the area.

The festival is held across Earl's Court, spanning a four-week schedule. It presents a diverse range of entertainment with live music at The Troubadour, open air cinema in Nevern Square, a

street fair in the Kenway Village, theatre productions in the Brompton Cemetery, art exhibitions, tea parties, salsa dance workshops, fashion shows, literary events and much, much more.

For further information call **020 7370 0015** or email info@eccf.org.uk. The Festival also has a website www.eccf.org.uk where you can find detailed listings for all the events.

Chelsea Arts Festival

The all new **Chelsea Arts Festival** (Saturday 13th–Wednesday 24th June) aims to take its audience right through the ever-fascinating Chelsea village, with events taking place in venues ranging from the prestigious Cadogan Hall and the historic Royal Hospital to smaller, quirkier venues such as the London Sketch Club, the Chelsea Arts Club, the Chelsea Theatre and Lots Road's 606

Club. There are a variety of events, including rock legend Rick Wakeman performing with an orchestra at Cadogan Hall, open studios and gardens, the free annual cricket match and an art exhibition staged by the Chelsea Art Society.

For more information contact the box office on **0845 890 2435**. Please note, there is a charge for some of the events.

Arts in the Royal Borough

Hot off the press, the **Arts in the Royal Borough** booklet is a new practical guide to help direct artists, arts organisations and residents to the correct council department for their arts related query, from parks and ecology to social care and

regeneration, as well as providing contact details for those seeking further information.

If you would like more information contact the Arts Service on **020 7361 2062** or arts@rbkc.gov.uk

Active for life

Many of us recognise that we do not do enough exercise. It is recommended that we complete five 30-minute sessions of physical activity every week in order to stay healthy. This does not have to include sport or going to the gym. Taking the stairs instead of the lift and doing household chores can be exercise. You don't have to transform your life to feel better. Simply build more activity into your daily routine. The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea's Sports Development Team have updated their *Active for Life* guide, which provides a comprehensive list of all physical activity sessions for adults in the area. To get a copy, contact the Sports Development Team on **020 7938 8180** or visit www.rbkc.gov.uk/sport/sportsdevelopment

Exhibition Road Music Day

The **Annual Music Day** joins forces with the **London Festival of Architecture** to celebrate international music and architecture, bringing Exhibition Road to the centre of London's cultural life on the 21st June (10am to midnight). Immerse yourself in over 150 musical performances (on 25 different stages), 30 architectural structures, events and exhibitions, plus interactive workshops, talks and tours ... For more information visit www.exhibitionroad.org or call **020 7361 3003**.

University of the Third Age – U3A

It's not a conventional university. There are no exams and no qualifications and it's open to anyone who is retired or semi-retired. It was started twenty-five years ago by the same people who started the Open University, and with a similar aim – open learning for everyone. The big difference is that it is 'self help' learning, with members sharing their knowledge and experience of a topic and studying together in informal groups rather than by formal classes with a teacher.

The nearest U3A to Kensington & Chelsea is Hammersmith & Fulham U3A, which has been in operation for three years. Regular 'open meetings' are held on the second Tuesday morning of each month in St. Mary's Church Hall, Edith Road,

West Kensington, at the junction with Hammersmith Rd, near Olympia starting at 10.30am. Speakers cover a variety of topics such as oral history recording, the work of the Samaritans, the British Library, the Royal Ballet, Guide Dogs for the Blind and Safer Neighbourhood Policing, etc.

There are also a variety of 'interest groups' including arts and crafts, a book club, creative writing, current affairs, drama and theatre, family history, food and drink (visiting local restaurants), French conversation, local history, music appreciation, natural history, play reading and walking. Regular visits are also made to museums and places of interest. Group meetings are held either in members' homes or in local

community facilities.

Membership is £17.50 a year, including access to all meetings for members. Monthly 'open meetings' are open to non-members for a fee of £1.50. If you would like further information, please contact the membership secretary on **020 8789 5183** or *handfu3a@btinternet.com*

Fancy a swim?

From the beginning of April, people over 60 are to be given free admission to local swimming pools as part of an initiative to get more people involved in sport by 2012. Free swimming will be available at both Chelsea Sports Centre and Kensington Leisure Centre until March 2011.

To apply, you will need to bring confirmation of your identity and date of birth (passport, birth certificate or driving licence) and proof of your address (a recent utility bill or bank statement) to either Chelsea Sports Centre (Chelsea Manor Street, SW3 – **020 7352 6985**) or Kensington Leisure Centre (Walmer Road, W11 – **020 7727 9747**). You will be issued with a membership card that you will need to bring every time you visit.

Forum for older residents

The Kensington & Chelsea Forum for Older Residents will be meeting again on September the 11th from 2pm till 4pm in the Small Hall, Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, W8.

The topic is unconfirmed at the time of going to press, but these meetings are always

informative, with lively debates. For more information on this meeting or on the work of the forum and how you can get more involved, call **020 7820 6781**.

As usual, we will have a stall there. Do visit our stall in the foyer outside before or after the event.

Computer Corner

Friday 15th May was **Silver Surfers' Day**. We marked the day by going to Bramley Gardens sheltered housing scheme with a group of students from the Southbank International School to teach residents how to use the new computer in their lounge. Below you will find some of the websites which they found most useful/interesting:



<http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/>

Online newspapers from around the world. Use the drop down menus to choose a country. We looked at the papers from Bolivia.

<http://www.ageconcern.org.uk/community/>

Interested in meeting new people or simply socialising online? Try this Age Concern site as an alternative to facebook.

<http://www.lovefooty.net/>

One of the football fans at Bramley Gardens wanted to see some football highlights and found this great site.

<http://silversurfers.digitalunite.com/category/jokes/>

People participating in this national event were asked to post their favourite jokes on this site. Read a joke or post your own.

If you are a resident of a sheltered housing scheme and you cannot attend computer classes but you are keen to learn how to access the internet, send an email or simply type a document, please call Ben Long at Age Concern on **020 8969 9105**.

Do you need the Newsletter in a different format?

Call us on **020 7471 5551** if you have difficulty reading this newsletter. You can request your copy in large print or on tape. We can also email the newsletter to you – which will be more environmentally friendly.

Jack Jones – champion of workers and pensioners

On the April 21st this year, 'Union Man' Jack Jones passed away at the age of 96 at a nursing home in Peckham. Once known as 'the most powerful man in Britain', Jack had a very distinguished career as veteran of the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War, leader of the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), president of the National Pensioners' Convention, vice-president of Age Concern and other important roles.

Born to a working class family in Liverpool in 1913, Jack was named James Larkin Jones after the renowned Irish socialist leader Jim Larkin (1867–1943) who had founded the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. Jack's father knew Jim Larkin while they both worked on the Liverpool docks. In later life, Jack attended the unveiling of a memorial to Jim Larkin in O'Connell Street, Dublin.

Coming from a poor background, Jack had to leave school at 14 to become an apprentice at an engineering company and later joined the TGWU, which he was eventually to lead through the tumultuous period of economic, social and political upheavals in the '60s and '70s.

As an implacable opponent of Fascism, Jack supported the

Republicans in the Spanish Civil War by joining the ranks of the International Brigade and later earned promotion to political and welfare officer. He was shot in the shoulder in the ferocious Battle of the Ebro (the last great Republican offensive of that war) and had to be repatriated to England after initial treatment in Spanish hospitals.

Upon recuperation, Jack resumed his trade union activities by representing the workers in automotive and aircraft factories in Coventry, who contributed massively toward the efforts against the Nazis in the Second World War. His efforts were rewarded with continuous promotion to eventually become General Secretary of the TGWU in 1969.

Upon retirement from the TGWU, he was treated to a party attended by 2,500 people at the Festival Hall in London. The TGWU also presented him with a cheque for £10,000 which caused him such deep embarrassment that he ended up donating it to a pensioners'

If you would like to make a short contribution to the Newsletter, or read about a particular topic, please contact Age Concern on 020 7471 5551.



group. He was also offered a peerage, but turned that down too as he disapproved of the idea of trade unionists sitting in the House of Lords. Instead, he accepted the title of Companion of Honour, not for himself but on behalf of the entire trade union movement. He lived in a modest council house in Peckham and continued actively fighting his campaigns on behalf of workers, the unemployed and pensioners to the very end of his eventful and rewarding life.

It was my great honour and privilege to meet Jack last year at an event commemorating those who had fallen in the bombing of Guernica by the Germans and Italians supporting the Fascists in the Spanish Civil War. He graciously consented to pose for me for the photograph accompanying this article.

Martin Burke

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