

HORNSEY PENSIONERS

www.hornseypag.org.uk

Hornsey Pensioners Action Group serves pensioners within Hornsey & Wood Green and other neighbouring parliamentary constituencies

August 2020 – Bulletin 5

Alert: Do you ring your GP's surgery to order repeat prescriptions? You will no longer be able to do this. NHS England instructs GP surgeries to accept such requests electronically or in person.

Lockdown Changes

- Hand washing and social distancing remain essential to avoid contact with the virus- now encouraged to wear face coverings in public spaces such as shops - mandatory on public transport and in shops from 24th July.
- Outdoor venues such as Zoos may be visited. More opportunities for eating out, with prior booking. You may travel abroad to selected countries with low infection rates.
- Hairdressers are open, but must adopt protective measures to prevent cross infection.
- Note: Muswell Hill Library is open, with separation measures in place.
- Social distancing preferably 2 metres, but where not possible this is "one metre plus" in offices restaurants, pubs and bars. Protective screens are installed for receptionists; customers have recommended sitting arrangements and staggered admission times.
- Outdoors, people from multiple households can meet in groups of up to six.
- Day time trips allowed to outdoor areas, but not for those who are "shielding".
- People who are **clinically vulnerable and are "shielding"** can now gather in groups of up to six people **outdoors**, including individuals outside of their household, and form a "support bubble" with one other household.

Signing petitions and sending letters objecting to the decision do help.

The press release from Jan Shortt, General Secretary of the National Pensioners Convention can be downloaded from www.hornseypag.org.uk. You will also find the replies to her letter and a template letter for you to send. In addition a letter to 'Save the BBC' can be downloaded in Ham & High on July 23rd.

More information about the TV licence campaign and the NPC is available on www.npcuk.org 'In The News' section.

Note that regular information is sent by email to Associate members of London Region NPC. This costs £5 per year. Contact Janet. When the office re-opens those not on email can get it by post.

There will be a protest to oppose the loss of the over 75's TV licence outside the BBC Television Tower at Alexandra Palace from 11.00 to 11.30 on Thursday July 30th.

Supporters welcome but wear a mask and observe social distancing. The W3 bus stops near.

How come the BBC has to foot the bill for what is a universal pensioner benefit – the over 75's Concessionary TV licence?

5.4 million people aged over 75 are now expected to pay the TV licence on August 1st or be cut off. It costs £157.50 per year. **You will receive a bill in the post.**

The concessionary TV licence is still available to those on Pension Credit. If you are finding it difficult to make ends meet **apply for pension credit now!**

According to the Government, more than three million households are eligible for **pension credit**, but 4 out of 10 **fail to claim** the benefit – in **many** cases because they don't realise they're entitled to it.

Find the **AgeUK** advice on how to apply.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/our-impact/campaigning/save-free-tv-for-older-people/>

How do I claim Pension Credit?

First make sure you've reached the qualifying age.

It only takes one phone call and you won't have to fill in a form. Call the **Pension Credit claim line** on **0800 99 1234** (textphone: 0800 169 0133). They will fill in the application for you over the phone. It'll be quicker if you have the following details to hand:

- National Insurance number
- Bank account details
- Information about your income, savings and investments
- Information about your pension (if you have one)
- Details of any housing costs (such as mortgage, interest payments, service charges)
- Partner's details (if you have a partner)

You can also claim online at www.gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim If you haven't claimed your State Pension or are responsible for young people included in your claim, you'll need to claim by phone. If you need help, speak to your local Age UK for help with claiming Pension Credit. **(Haringey does not have an Age UK)**

Ellen Lebethe is one of the NPC Vice-presidents:

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/black-britain-woman-83-tells-22247900>

Maureen Childs is Chair@ Green Seniors and a regular at LESE Pensioners Network Seminars and open meetings. – As seen on ITV GMB, Friday 10 July 2020

Watch here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qyd6fO8r8io



Ask your MP to sign EDM 747: BBC TV Licenses (20th July 2020)

That this House supports the urgent reversal of the decision to make over-75s pay for TV licences during the covid-19 outbreak; notes with concern that licenses will have to be paid for from August 2020; believes that responsibility for funding free TV licences should not have been handed over by the Government to the BBC; highlights that loneliness amongst the over 75s has worsened as a result of the covid-19 outbreak; further highlights that stripping the over-75s of their free TV licenses will exacerbate loneliness; and calls on the Government to reconsider the issue as a matter of urgency. Parliament, Tabled 20 July 2020, <https://is.gd/Oq2ADS>

Goodbye Cinderella



The NPC makes the case for a National Care Service, as Covid-19 exposes how UK fails our most vulnerable, with the launch of our book 'Goodbye Cinderella - A New Settlement for Care Services'.

The book, which costs £2 plus p&p, is available to order now. Let the committee know if you want a copy. We can do a bulk order.

Produced by Mia Anderson

Keeping Fit

The booklet '*Active at Home: A guide to being active at home during the coronavirus outbreak*' is attached. This starter summary is suggested by Jeff Hurrell.

1. Step Ups.

Stand at the foot of your stairs. Step up with your left foot, followed by your right. Step down with your left, followed by your right. The old left, right, left right. Do 5. Then do 5 the opposite way round. Right, left, right, left. Use some support (bannister or wall) if needs be, but try to ween yourself off said support. Be mindful as to where you are placing your feet. It's a simple movement, but try to be precise with your movements.

2. Stand & Sit.

Use a dining type chair. Sit toward the front third. Feet hip to shoulder width apart and a little way out from the chair, knees approximately at 90 degrees. Stand up tall. Sit back down and do it again. 5-10 times. If possible try not to let all of your weight come down on the chair when you sit. This may take some practice. Imagine the chair is a priceless family heirloom left in your care!

3. Leg Swings.

Stand behind your chair, sideways on. Hold on with your right hand. Gently swing your left leg 10 times, then repeat on your right leg. Hold on as lightly as you can, but as much as you need. A progression would be to bend the knee a little as well as the swing. Look to master the swinging movement first, then add the bend.

4. Calf Stretch.

Place your left foot close to the wall, toes pointing toward said wall. Step back with your right foot as far as you can, so long as you can keep your heel down and your toes straight ahead. Lean forward, taking your weight over your front leg. Hopefully you'll feel a gentle stretch in your calf (back leg). Hold for 20 seconds. Repeat on the other leg.

Book recommended - '40 Days under Covid-19 lockdown' by Rita Mann.

This diary-journal from a foster carer & key worker lays open the maelstrom of daily life under Covid-19 lockdown and asks probing questions as to where we all go from here. Price: £13.99 ISBN: 978-1-71689-018-5
Press Contacts: ritamann2020@gmail.com **Mob:** 0795 127 3845

From Andrea Wershoff, Senior Local Area Coordinator - acting safeguarding lead, COVID-19 helpline

Andrea makes a suggestion as to how payment can be made for shopping etc. by those of us unable to get cash from a bank. One of the ideas is a system whereby the resident orders their shopping from a voluntary group; a volunteer does the shopping and delivers it to the resident; the volunteer has a card payment machine with them that will only accept payment for the exact amount that's on the supermarket receipt.

This means:

- *no cash changes hands*
- *reduced risk of infection*
- *if the card is contactless, it can all be done at arm's length with the minimum of contact*
- *people get the shopping they actually want and like, from the shop they prefer*
- *reduced risk of financial discrepancies or mismanagement*

Would you please ask your colleagues, service users, residents, friends, etc., and let me know:

- *Do you think this is something that older people would be willing to do?*
- *Do you think older people might not have debit cards and would need help to set these up?*
- *How do you think people would feel about using this kind of system?*

Tel: 07966 149813

Email: andrea.wershof@haringey.gov.uk

Shopping

Morrisons have created a telephone service for those who are over 70 and/or vulnerable and not able to shop online. Customers who wish to place an order for delivery should call **0345 611 6111** and press **option 5**.

How can we help more members get online? GENERATION EXCHANGE

Generation Exchange has received funding from the London Community Response to help older people get online and stay safe online. Let Claire know if you need a bit of help getting started with Zoom, Skype, What's App, help with emails or advice on buying a new device. They will do their best to help you with IT support over the phone. Contact **Claire Frost: 07484 182087**
Generation Exchange's Charity Director.
generationexchange1@gmail.com

TUC London, East & South East (LESE) Pensioners' Network discuss 'Isolation and Loneliness' with Guest Speaker: Dr. Jenny Groarke, Lecturer in Health Psychology, Queen's University Belfast.

Online Zoom Meeting, Tuesday 25 August 2020,
3pm - 4.30pm

Please register: dlewis@tuc.org.uk / 020 7467 122

Muswell Hill Library

We would like to give you an update on the reopening of libraries in Haringey, and in particular of Muswell Hill Library, which has been partially open over the last week (well done if you noticed this!).

Muswell Hill Library (and St Ann's Library) will continue with the opening hours of **10.30am to 2.30pm, Monday to Saturday**. From Monday 13th July, Wood Green Library will now also be open 10am to 4pm, Monday – Saturday, until further notice.

These libraries will offer Drop Boxes, Click and Collect and Grab & Go (see below for the meaning of these terms) as well as up to one hour of computer use at Muswell Hill and St Ann's. Please note that the number of computers available will be limited.

Drop Boxes – users can return books in a designed 'drop box' situated just inside the library.

Click and Collect – collection of books that have been pre-ordered online or by phone

Grab & Go – grab a self-selection of books by customers but with no provision to sit or stay to browse

Please continue to stay safe and look after yourselves.

George Danker

Chairman, *Friends of Muswell Hill Library*

Key Contacts: Ann Anderson 020 8340 8335

Pamela Jefferys 020 8444 0732

Janet Shapiro 07804 936 139 (text) or janet.rmshapiro@gmail.com

War Stories 2

We pensioners are all of an age to have been affected in some way by the War as children, and it might be interesting to hear other stories. I too, only knew my father through my mother's experience of him, but his absence was for a very different reason to others.

My father was a Czech communist (from the Sudetenland) and had to flee in 1938 just before the Nazis marched into his country. He left a wife and 6 children behind.



The Melzer family left behind

My mother (20 years younger than him), also a communist, first met him working in the Land Army in Cumberland. Towards the end of the War they met up in London. He was ill and sad, and they found so much to share that they became lovers and started living together in Cardiff, both working in the munitions' factories there.

Eight years after he had last seen or heard of his family, a letter arrived with the War's end. I was on the way. Both my parents were tormented, as they had fallen deeply in love. He chose to return to a wife, who had survived much Nazi terror directed at her, in order to get her to reveal where my father was, near starvation, and his children were craving to see him. His firstborn, a son, had been forced to fight for Hitler and had never returned from battle in the USSR.

I was born two days after he had left. I have a certificate that says he is the father of my mother's child! I also have his love letters to my mother and so know so much about his side of things. His absence haunted both my mother and I.



Vaughan's parents and Vaughan as an infant

She never got over his loss, but did go on to live a rich and interesting life, marrying a Nigerian, having my sister when I was 15 and going to live and work in Nigeria. I met my father when I was 19, in the GDR where he had lived from 1946. Eventually when the Berlin Wall fell, I became friends with all my half-siblings and am now treated as a special English member of the Melzer family! My mother never met my father again but did meet one of his daughters.

Vaughan Melzer

Poetry Please

Did you know that Gordon Peters is a poet? He sends us a link to his poem 'The Gift'.

https://wordsofthewild.co.uk/?page_id=10469

The Gift

He came in by chance
but how do I know that?
After all, I carry on not taking
the road not taken,
whereas when he puts one foot
glidingly after the other
then sits on haunches,
stares with silent seduction,
walks till he meets the rug,
snouts the tassel into a bundle,
then lies with chin resting
in that Zen pose,
who is to say how he chose.

Now he is always there.
Never fretful, often hungry,
lavish in comfort,
mean in moving,
an expert in nudging
and wordless communicator
who lives
in the realm of the senses.
We are the ones who feed and upkeep
yet he gives the most
and is mostly asleep.

Gordon Peters