



The Passing of Dawn Stephenson



It is with great sadness that we inform you of the passing of Dawn Stephenson. Dawn passed away on Saturday. She had been a valued leader of Age UK Hammersmith and Fulham team since the 10th of November 2005 and will be missed. Dawn recently retired from her role as Chief Executive on the 14th of August 2020 due to ill health.

It was hoped that the decision would have aided her long-term recovery. It is truly devastating that wasn't what happen and that she wasn't able to enjoy her well deserved retirement. Dawn was passionate about Age UK Hammersmith and Fulham, older people and people in general. She had a beautiful smile that could disarm anyone. She was able to communicate with everyone and made them feel that they were the centre of her universe. She was inspirational and led us through difficult times, using her excellent negotiating skills to get people on side and donate to our charity, either giving financially, or with their time or services. She had a presence and energy that had not diminished despite being ill for over five years.

Dawn valued her family above everything and was a very proud grandmother. It was almost a daily ritual of her showing off her granddaughter. Please keep Dawn's family in your thoughts as they go through this difficult time.

If you would like to pass a message of condolence on to Dawn's family or hear further news regarding her funeral, please contact us on info@ageukhf.org.uk.

Our Achievements in Lockdown

As we begin to open our centre's doors and cautiously emerge from lockdown we look back at what has been a whirlwind of activity to ensure the needs of isolated older individuals could be met. Doing what we could to prevent the extremes of loneliness and, with our partners, ensuring sustenance for those who have been shielding. Lockdown has brought many changes to everyone's lives here at Age UK Hammersmith and Fulham.

From setting up specialist befriending services to meal and medicine deliveries and zoom classes to keep us all connected. Our team has certainly been busy!

Since the onset of lockdown...

- Our beneficiaries have attended our online events 206 times with new people joining all the time.
- Together, with our partners, we have delivered 4,425 meals & essential supplies.
- We have helped more than 100 people feel less isolated on a weekly basis through our In touch Covid Isolation Buddy Services and Befriending services.
- Our befriending service has increased by 45% and we have recruited 50 volunteers to meet demand.
- We have supported over 364 clients to improve their digital skills and learn how to stay connected with friends and family.



Cautious Steps Towards Normal Life: Centre Reopening

August 10th

We are delighted to announce that our Activity Centre on Greyhound Road opened on Monday 10th August. We are once again serving lunch and will soon resume classes. Please keep an eye on our service updates as more of our services resume.

As we start to emerge from this unusual spring and summer hibernation, some people may naturally have worries or concerns about what to expect and whether they feel confident to attend. We hope the following information will help to answer your questions about the steps we are taking to keep everyone safe and well.

Deep-Clean Before Re-Opening

Green Zone Cleaning & Support Services have generously lent their professional help. Their team gave the Centre a thorough deep-cleaning prior to its reopening.

We are truly amazed by the standards they've been able to achieve!

This will help us ensure that we are able to provide a safe space for our clients, volunteers and staff to meet once again.



What Will Happen When I Arrive?

If you are not well, you should not come to the Centre at all. However, on arrival, everyone's temperature will additionally be checked to make sure that they aren't starting to develop symptoms of which they are not yet aware. This will involve a very simple forehead temperature check.

As long as your temperature is not raised at all, you will be able to come into the Centre. Unfortunately, if your temperature is raised above 37.5C you will not be able to come into the Centre and will need to return home. If this happens please also seek medical attention.

If the reception area is busy you may be asked to wait outside. We recommend that you book in advance to ensure your places as spaces are limited due to social diidelines

What Will Be Running?

The Centre will be open as usual Mon-Fri: 10am-4pm
Activities and classes: There will be a mixture of face-to-face and online activities. We are looking to reintroduce all our usual classes and activities. Initially, numbers attending the Centre may be smaller than normal in order to maintain safe distancing.
Information & Advice: Telephone and/or face-to-face appointments will be carried out. Initially, face to face appointments will be available on 2 days per week

Do I Need a Face Covering?

Everyone who comes into the Centre - staff, volunteers and clients - will need to wear a face-covering or face mask at all times, except when they are eating or actively involved in an exercise class.

Changes in Routine to Keep Everyone Safe

We have made some essential changes. We ask everyone visiting the Centre to help keep the risk of spreading coronavirus to a minimum by:

- Social distancing of at least one metre will be maintained.
- Face masks must be worn at all times except when eating or actively involved in an exercise class.
- Hand washing will be encouraged on a regular basis.
- Hand sanitiser will be available throughout the building.
- Toilets will be open. We request that you wash your hands before using the toilet and again afterwards. After leaving the toilet area, please also use hand-sanitiser (in addition to hand washing).
- Hot drinks and water available self serve. Please take care to only handle what you need
- The kitchen area will be closed except for staff and volunteers.

Delighted to Welcome You Back!

It has been a lonely and isolating experience to be confined to our own homes, cut-off from friends and our usual activities. We hope that by opening the Centre, we can all begin to return to some of the things that keep our lives vibrant, meaningful and happy. We thank everyone for your patience and understanding as we take these cautious steps towards re-opening and look forward to welcoming you back to Greyhound Road.

If you have any worries or concerns about coming back to the Activity Centre, please contact us to speak about this.

Activities Running at Greyhound Road & in Your Own Home!

It's Wednesday morning. Eve is busy dusting off her favourite hats. She has decided to try out a couple of summer creations, whereas her husband is considering whether to wear his trilby or cap. *"We're parading in our hats this afternoon,"* Eve explains. The Wednesday Zoom Social Meet Up & Quiz has become a regular feature, something to look forward to each week when many other activities had dried up.

A selection of our regular classes and activities have operated successfully online while the Centre has been closed. Ranging from our 'Dance West – Bolder Not Older' exercise class to the 'Let's Paint' art group, there has been something for everyone. Switching activities to an online platform has proven successful and popular, with our Digital Inclusion Team helping many people to access the Zoom classes and activities through a variety of digital devices. Numbers grew over time, with up to 10 or 12 people attending some classes each week.

The online classes have helped people such as Margueritte who, like Eve, also attends the Social Meet Up & Quiz. *"I love going on Zoom; we have a good laugh".* Thursday morning finds Brian and Theresa limbering up for the Knees, Joints & Ligaments exercise class. According to Brian, having a date in the diary has been really important: *"We're not very self-motivated and this gets us to do something!"*

For many people, getting online and seeing friends in the honeycomb of boxes on a screen instead of face to face has been a new and initially strange experience. However, the numbers attending the online classes have been comparable to face to face activities previously held in theActivity Centre. The success of this transition is in no small part a testament to the dedication and ingenuity of our Digital Inclusion Team.

When we reopen on August 10th we will be using a blended model, whereby classes will operate both face to face and online, to enable people to take part in whatever way feels most comfortable. We would love to see some new faces join in with our regulars, whether in our Centre or from the comfort of your own living room.



Online Activities

Want to Get Back in Touch with your Body?

Try Our Knees, Joints and Ligaments Exercise Class.

Give your whole body a gentle workout with this friendly and supportive group; from the comfort of your own home!

Emily Robinson's
Thursday

**KNEES
JOINTS
LIGAMENTS**



The young woman on my screen adjusts her laptop and repositions her chair so that she's fully in shot. There are a few waves, calls of "hello" and enquiries after each other's health. Johnny checks that everyone has made it online and ensures our first names are visible. A sea of faces smiles out in my direction and I, the new girl, smile back.

After a few minutes, everything falls quiet as devices are muted. We're ready for Emily to lead us through an hour of exercises that stretch, rotate and generally cajole our joints, muscles and ligaments into places that normal life often fails to take them. It is all very gentle and relaxing.

After a minute to focus on our breathing, floaty music starts up and, under Emily's instruction, we reach up to the ceiling and gently rotate our hands, wrists and arms back down to our sides. Seeing us all in our little spaces on the screen is like watching seaweed waving to the tune of a gentle sea current. We all share the same look of relaxed concentration. Not a popping sinew or strained face in sight! This is exercise we can all enjoy from the comfort of our own chair and the familiar space of home.

Emily has been running the Knees, Joints and Ligaments Exercise Class for Age UK Hammersmith & Fulham since 2018. Today we join Emily in her garden to work through a range of exercises that can be carried out either seated or standing.

Emily's brings her background in dance to the class. She sees transformations as people leave behind daily frustrations, get back in touch with the body's natural movements and gradually build their range of motion, poise, balance and self-confidence.

“You see people opening up; paying attention to what the body can do rather than what it can't.”

To a gentle soundtrack, Emily guides us through a range of exercise routines. For the beginner and seasoned exerciser alike, she allows plenty of time to practise each movement. *“Emily is a great teacher,”* Says Jacqueline. *“She is so young but she appreciates older people.”*

Despite having to demonstrate the exercises, juggle the tech and keep an eye on 14 of us in our Zoom boxes, Emily still finds time to suggest improvements. We sense our muscles making delicious stretches, we feel our heart rates rise a little and our bodies reconnect with moves that they haven't made for a while. The hour whizzes past and before we know it we've reached the cool down.

Afterwards there's time for a chat. Jaqueline feels the class helps you to become "physically flexible and mentally flexible" and helps improve everyday functions such as simply bending down to pick something up. Mairi loves the core exercises which, she says "make me feel more energetic." Brian also points out the social aspect: "we don't have a lot of contact, so it's nice to see some faces."

"The connection within the class is apparent. In Emily's words: "I love the group; it's like a family."

Now that the centre has reopened, Emily is teaching from Greyhound Road, with the online option still available for those unable or not yet quite ready to attend in person. There are clearly many converts to the Zoom exercise classes. In Brian's words:

"it's the best thing since sliced bread!"

All you need is comfortable clothes, a little space to stretch and some water on hand. Our Digital Inclusion team are here to help you work out the technical magic to get you onboard if you want to try it out online.



For more information on our classes:

Visit our website:

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/hammersmithandfulham/activities-and-events/online-activities/>

or Call 020 7386 2657

Contact our Digital Inclusion team if you need help getting online:

Email digital@ageukhf.org.uk

or Call 020 7386 90

Welcome Back to Our Charity Shop

With measures in place following government guidelines, our charity

shop opened on Tuesday, 23rd June. The shop team have been very busy keeping everyone safe while accepting lots of donations.

We have been overwhelmed by everyone's generosity as we come out of lockdown and, although we are not quite as busy as we were, our regular bargain hunters are returning. We've been given some excellent items and we're so grateful for donations.



If you've had a clear out during lockdown and you have some unwanted but still desirable donations please call 020 8749 9888 in advance to arrange with our shop staff.

Meet Our New Trustees

Seema Odedra

Seema is a qualified physiotherapist and is the clinical director of a healthcare group. She has a 10-year history in healthcare, working on implementing health innovation in her current role. She is motivated to create change in the healthcare system, especially regarding musculoskeletal pathways impacting the elderly population. Seema is bringing this experience and passion to help Age UK Hammersmith and Fulham to enhance and enrich the lives of the elderly.



Alexandra Stainov

As Fundraising Manager for an independent hospital in Central London, Alexandra brings a wealth of experience not just in fundraising but also in communications and marketing. After a successful track record in new business development for international media groups, Alexandra decided in 2013 to transfer her energy and commitment to an environment which is more in line with her life values. Alexandra's knowledge, understanding and interest in all matters pertaining to older people find strong roots in her own personal experience as her elderly mother's sole carer for many years. She is deeply concerned by the issue of loneliness and its impact on the health and wellbeing of older people.



Cllr Amanda Lloyd-Harris

Amanda is a Borough Councillor in Hammersmith & Fulham. Her remit is Adult Social Care. She has a long history of working in the community whether in London, New York or Melbourne where she was raised. She is a practising psychotherapist. She is also a trustee at Lygon Almshouse where accommodation is provided for the Borough's older residents and is the community liaison representative for The Bridge Academy. As chair of the Palace Riverside Safer Neighbourhood Panel she spends time working with local sheltered accommodation residents to keep them safe. She has also been chair of H&F Mind, a trustee of H&F Mencap, and chair for 11 years of The Friends of Bishops Park.



James Flitton

James has considerable experience in the technology sector, holding positions in engineering, operations and sales during his 20 years in the sector. He is currently vice president of business operations for a global technology company. He brings this technology and business experience to the charity.

James is committed to using his experience to enrich the lives of older people in the Hammersmith and Fulham community.



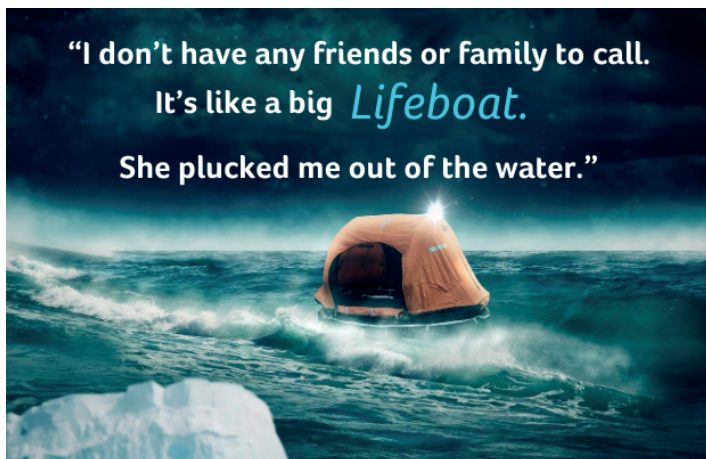
A Lifeboat When The Seas Are Rough:

Making an Impact as a Volunteer Befriender

“For the first time in my life I met someone who will listen to me.”

Alessandro had lived in London for many years, having moved from Italy as a young man. Life wasn't easy, with many setbacks in his personal circumstances and work life which resulted in him being homeless for a number of years.

He eventually found a place to live, supported by a carer who helped him manage his health problems and get life back on track. Things improved for Alessandro but he remained relatively isolated with few regular contacts. And then the arrival of coronavirus brought its uniquely new and difficult challenges. Someone suggested that he speak to Age UK Hammersmith & Fulham and within a short space of time he was put in touch with one of our recently recruited Befrienders, Jacklynn. At this point Alessandro's life took a new and profound turn.



Jacklynn found herself furloughed during lockdown and joined Age UK H&F as a volunteer Befriender and Digital Champion, feeling that she wanted “to make an impact” and help support people who might be feeling particularly lonely or isolated.

Within a few minutes of speaking with Alessandro on the phone they both felt “it was a click from the word go.” They chatted for over an hour during that first call and then began to speak each week.

As a Digital Champion, Jacklynn introduced Alessandro to a wealth of resources available via the internet. He has a great love of music and, when he was experiencing difficulties accessing his usual music, she encouraged him to explore sites such as YouTube. In Alessandro's words, Jacklynn talked him through *"step by step"* and, although initially lacking confidence, he decided to give it a go and discovered to his delight: *"I had my music back!"*

Having taken this first step, Jacklynn then guided him through the process of finding his favourite Western films, sent him amusing video clips to brighten his day and even suggested links to relaxation music that could help when sleep proved difficult. A whole new world had opened up to Alessandro and, more importantly, he now felt he had a friend at the other end of the phone to share his discoveries with.

After a few weeks, Jacklynn arranged to take a trip back to Canada to visit family but was keen to maintain the contact with Alessandro, which was now an established and important part of his weekly routine. She suggested that they continue to call via WhatsApp, another application that was new to him.

Alessandro explains how Jacklynn rang and said: *"we can call, do video's, whatever we want. Again she taught me how to do it."* They trialled it while she was still in the UK and Alessandro quickly got used to what was involved, including the inevitable time-lag occurring during online conversations. As a result, they were able to continue their important weekly catch-ups throughout Jacklynn's trip abroad.

"For the first time in my life, I met someone who will spend time with me, listen to me. ...I told her you are an angel." According to Alessandro, having weekly chats with Jacklynn makes him feel happy and relaxed. He has regained lost confidence. *"I feel much better. Last year I was really low and I lost respect for myself."* Since being supported by our Befriending Service, Alessandro says he *"started to see things more positively"* and has begun looking forward to things once again.

The impact that the Befriending Service has made to Alessandro's life is best left to him to describe. *"I don't have any friends or family to call. It's like a big lifeboat. She plucked me out of the water."*

As for Jacklynn, she describes feeling *"really proud of him"* for having tackled things which were new and daunting. *"When you reach out and someone needs a hand, it makes it so rewarding."* Jacklynn describes volunteering as *"such a joy and a privilege,"* continuing that it is *"a unique opportunity for a volunteer: it's not just a phone-call."*



Outstanding Meal Delivery Service Made Possible by Pear Drops

We are indebted to the incredible work of our partners, Pear Drops Catering, for supplying meals cooked with care, flair and great professionalism to many vulnerable older people affected by the impact of coronavirus in our Borough.

Thanks beyond words must go to Daz Seager and his firm who have provided over 8,000 meals during the pandemic to those who are frail, housebound or have had very little in the way of support. The issue was daunting...if people could not go out, if they were isolating and shielding, how would they actually eat?

Our Meal Delivery Service has helped people like Eve who used to attend lunches with her husband at our Activity Centre on Greyhound Road. Since lockdown they have been receiving meals twice a week. In Eve's words,

"they're so useful and so helpful...saves you cooking and saves you searching for something to eat when your freezer's going down."

We offer a wholehearted thank you to the fantastic Pear Drops team, from all of the staff and clients at Age UK Hammersmith & Fulham. Your commitment has been outstanding, helping older and vulnerable people to feel cared for and connected throughout the many difficult months of the pandemic.

A beautiful place to enjoy an evening, The Peartree Public House can be found at 14 Margravine Rd, Hammersmith, London W6 8HJ

Learning New Skills During Lockdown

There were many types of lockdown. For keyworkers, an intensely busy and stressful period with few opportunities to rest or relax.

For some furloughed or newly working from home, an opportunity to take a step off the roundabout and reconnect with things we had lost sight of.

However, for many people, lockdown has been a lonely and disorienting time. A British Red Cross survey of 2000 adults across the UK identified that 41% of people felt lonelier during lockdown. Some clients and volunteers have shared the ways in which they have kept active and engaged over recent months, upskilling themselves in the process.



Sue's Story

Sue has been a dedicated volunteer at our Activity Centre for years, regularly working with us for 3 days a week before lockdown descended. Plummeting from a busy life to being at home full-time was hard, especially as Sue was self-isolating from family within her own home.

Sue decided that she needed to find something to give her back her sense of purpose. Searching online, she came across 5D Painting which she describes as “like painting by numbers” except that you are using small diamond-shaped plastic beads to create the images.



Margueritte's Story

Margueritte was a regular at bingo and an enthusiastic participant in many Activity Centre events. So when the Centre had to close she was delighted that some classes were continuing, albeit online. She decided to try out the Wednesday afternoon Zoom quiz and exercise class.

Eve had initial worries about making the technology work. “I never touched things that I didn't know what would happen.” However, with support from John in our Digital Inclusion Team she succeeded in getting online and says now:

So far, Sue has completed some flowers, a star-sign design and a picture of butterflies.

She is currently working on her fourth. What Sue particularly loves about her new hobby is that it is *“very calming and de-stressing.”* At times when other activities such as reading may be difficult to concentrate on, the 5D paintings can be worked on for a few minutes, put down and

returned to later when she next has a moment. What is more, unlike jigsaws, her cat can't scatter the pieces everywhere!

Sue is very much looking forward to the Activity Centre reopening so she can resume her volunteering role. In the meantime, she's enjoying her new-found hobby and, when a picture is completed, she has the added bonus of something colourful to cheer up her home.

“I love going on Zoom; we have a good laugh. I've found a new thing on my laptop!”

Margueritte enjoys her new-found confidence in using her laptop to access the class and feels that it has been instrumental in keeping her connected with friends: *“It's brilliant. It's helped because you can see people's faces that you used to see every week and we all wave at one another. It's good because you can talk on there and it's lovely!”*

Margueritte has also played a key role in keeping members of another club that she attends in contact with one another, making around 100 calls each week to have a chat and check people are okay. Yet she has still found time to design a colourful window display in support of keyworkers and is currently hard at work completing a 2000-piece jigsaw puzzle!

“A wonderful bunch of people turned up in running gear. The food was chilled in backpacks and delivered as they ran...very many thanks”

We were very fortunate to have had the help of Fresh Fitness Foods during lockdown. Fresh Fitness Foods is a meal delivery service which gives customers a bespoke meal plan based on your own personalised nutrition algorithm in consultation with a team of qualified nutritionists. They joined us early on in offering food to people in lockdown.

www.freshfitnessfood.com





Tribute to Those We Lost During The Pandemic

Farewell Dearest Friends

Tomorrow has not come for many who visited our centre. Their laughter grown dim and the pandemic hastened their passing. The light in an older eye raised with a smile now not flourishing because the time to leave has finally dawned. We wanted to say thank you for the time you allowed us to share with you at our lunch club and on our shopping trips as the befriended. We miss you and will refuse to forget how you brought us joy.

Farewell to your fire spirit, which burned so brightly which gave younger hearts courage compassion and knowledge. Thank you for your irregular path which brought you to us showing the maze of footprints to the future. We miss the comet streak you left behind seared in our hearts. But your energy lives in us now.

Take your journey home and watch over us.

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