

Westminster PLUS

Essential information for Westminster's older residents

Issue 14 – October 2011



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Welcome and news

Welcome to the winter edition of Westminster Plus, packed with the latest news, advice and information for residents aged 60 plus.

We have lots of offers and events over the coming months to help brighten up your winter – most notably the Tea Dance on Sunday 18th December. Tickets will be allocated in a prize draw, see page 4 for details.

Keeping warm and well in your home is vital to your health and wellbeing. Rising fuel costs are a worry for many people, but there is a lot of help and support available to you. Turn to page 6 to find out more.

Have you visited a new Community Hub? On page 8 you will find that there are lots of activities, support sessions and social events available to keep you healthy, independent and active.

This is followed by our regular NHS advice page

on page 12, on diabetes. It can be easily treated but may cause problems if it isn't diagnosed – so make sure you arrange a check-up with your GP if you are concerned.

Then, page 13 gives you an update on how some of our service changes may affect you, including day care centres and the Taxicard scheme.

Finally, don't forget that there are lots of other offers, events and news throughout this issue that we just haven't got room to mention here – so make sure you take a look.

We hope that you stay warm, well and active this winter.



**Councillor
Lady Flight**
Westminster
Older People's
Champion

Christabel

Cabinet Support, 18th Floor,
City Hall, 64 Victoria Street,
London, SW1E 6QP
cllrflight21@btinternet.com



**Councillor
Astaire**
Cabinet Member
for Adult Services
and Health

Daniel Astaire

Cabinet Support, 18th Floor,
City Hall, 64 Victoria Street,
London, SW1E 6QP
dastaire@westminster.gov.uk

On the cover:
Tom Lovesey,
read about his
life on page 10



Your One Stop

One Stop Services in Westminster are changing. In the past, face-to-face council services including payments, advice, support and enquiries, have been available at Harrow Road One Stop, Church Street One Stop and City Hall One Stop on Victoria Street.

City Hall One Stop has now closed, and over the next few months, Harrow Road and Church Street One Stops will also close.

Where do I go now to pay my bills?

The easiest way to pay your bills is to go online at **www.westminster.gov.uk/youronestoponline**.

Alternatively, you can visit Your One Stop Express self-serve machines in convenient locations across the city, including libraries, community centres, and for CityWest Homes residents, area service centres and some estate offices.

Your One Stop Express offers FREE access to council services online, including card payments, and is available at 12 locations across Westminster – and we'll keep adding more throughout 2011 and 2012.

You can also visit your nearest Westminster Post Office branch to make card, cash or cheque payments for council services.

You can find out more – and see a map of Your One Stop Express and Post Office branch locations at www.westminster.gov.uk/youronestop or from Harrow Road or Church Street One Stop Services until December 2011.

Your local library

If you are unsure about how to pay your bills online, you can use a computer at your local library, or take a computer course to help you brush up on your skills.

You can also take computer lessons and courses through your new Community Hubs – see page 8 to find out more about them.

Visit your local library or call 020 7641 1400 for information.

Did you know...

...you can read Westminster Plus online at www.westminster.gov.uk/westminsterplus


City of Westminster



Out and about

Find out how to apply for Tea Dance tickets and enter our competitions for theatre and concert outings.



The Tea Dance is back

The Tea Dance is the ideal way to get into the festive spirit, with afternoon tea, a big band and lots of dancing.

Due to popular demand, and so that everyone has a fair chance of getting tickets, they will be allocated in a prize draw.

This year, we request that you do not call the Senior Passport line to enter. Instead, you can enter online at **www.westminster.gov.uk/teadance**. Or you can write to: **Communications, 17th Floor, Westminster City Hall, 64 Victoria St, SW1E 6QP.**

When: Sunday 18th December from 2-4.30pm

Where: Grosvenor House, Park Lane, W1K 7TN



Terms and conditions apply, see the website for details.

Please remember:

- to state whether you require one or two tickets
- you must be aged 65 plus and live in Westminster to attend
- non-Westminster residents are not permitted
- residents who win tickets should not pass them on to non-Westminster residents under any circumstances
- the closing date is Friday 4th November
- winners will be picked at random and contacted by post before Friday 18th November
- you will only be contacted if you win tickets.

WIN Classical music tickets

Now is your chance to win two tickets to 'One Thousand and One Arabian Nights', an exotic array of music from Grieg, Sibelius and Rimsky-Korsokov performed by Orpheus Sinfonia.

Where: St. George's Church, Hanover Square, W1S 1FX

When: Wednesday 16th November, 7.30pm

Enter online at **www.westminster.gov.uk/westminsterplus**. Terms and conditions apply, see the website for details.

Tickets have been kindly donated by the Orpheus Foundation, a charity committed to creating professional opportunities for the finest young musicians. Visit **www.orpheusfoundation.com** for details of their performances, including FREE lunchtime concerts throughout the year.



Entering our competitions

If you do not have access to a computer to enter our competitions online, you can access one at your local library or take a lesson or course through your new Community Hub – see page 8 to find out more about them. Or, you can write to: **Communications, 17th floor, Westminster City Hall, 64 Victoria St, London, SW1E 6QP.**



WIN Theatre tickets to The 39 Steps

The 39 Steps is the hilarious comedy based on the 1935 Hitchcock spy film. Winner of a Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Comedy, it features iconic scenes from the film such as the chase on the Flying Scotsman and the escape on the Forth Bridge.

Where: Criterion Theatre, Piccadilly Circus, W1V 9LB



Enter online to win a pair of matinee tickets at **www.westminster.gov.uk/westminsterplus**. Terms and conditions apply, see the website for details.

Keep warm and healthy

With rising fuel costs, many people struggle to keep warm in their homes. But there is a lot of help and support available.

“It is vital that people understand the importance of keeping well and warm and know where they can go for help”

Peter Smith from National Energy Action



Being cold at home increases your risk of illness, particularly conditions such as bronchitis, asthma, strokes and heart disease. So if you are worried about the high cost of heating, there are a number of different ways you can get assistance, depending on your living arrangements.

Peter Smith from National Energy Action says: “Residents will experience poor health and reductions in general wellbeing as a result of cold living conditions, so it is vital that people understand the importance of keeping well and warm and know where they can go for help.”

“I was able to receive a grant to get my windows replaced. Now I can actually live in my flat without worrying about the cold”

Shirley Davies, 79, pictured right

Shirley Davies, 79, lived in a Paddington flat with very old windows. It was extremely draughty in the winter and put her health at serious risk.

She says: "As soon as I got in, I'd have to go to bed straight away as it was so cold. I got in touch with the Westminster Home Improvement Agency. They sent someone round and he was horrified. Because of my circumstances I was able to receive a grant to get the windows replaced. Now I can actually live in my flat without worrying about the cold."

Shirley urges everyone to make the most of the services on offer from the council: "Few people realise just how much help there is. The Home Improvement Team work wonderfully hard and they know what they're talking about. I really do feel that people like me are being looked after."



Support and advice

For information about services and support to help you reduce and manage your bills and general energy efficiency advice, contact the Home Health Helpline on **0800 336 699**.

If you have a problem with your heating or insulation please see the advice below:

Home owners

If you own your own home you may be eligible for a Decent Homes Grant from the council. These can be given to people on low incomes for works such as heating and insulation improvements. To find out if you are eligible for a grant or assistance call the Westminster Home Improvement Agency on **020 7641 8959**.

Private tenants

There are also grants and support available for low income private tenants. To find out if you are eligible for a grant or assistance, call the Westminster Home Improvement Agency on **020 7641 8959**.

Housing Association tenants

You should contact your landlord to raise any concerns about the heating or insulation of your home. If the problem persists, contact the council's Environmental Health Department on **020 7641 6161**.

Council tenants

If you rent your home from the council, contact your local estate office to raise any concerns about the heating or insulation of your home.

Did you know...
...there is a Westminster Warden on your street to deal with local issues? Visit westminster.gov.uk/westminsterwardens or call **020 7641 2000**

New Community Hubs

The council and NHS are funding four new community hubs and new support, information and advice services for people over 50.

The hubs are run by Open Age and Notting Hill Housing on our behalf, whilst the information and advice services are run by Age Concern Westminster and outreach provided by the Octavia Foundation. This is how you can get involved:

- take part in an activity such as social groups, physical activities, computer classes and creative and performing arts. Call your local hub for details
- go to an information and advice session to find out if you are getting the benefits you are entitled to. Call **020 3004 5610**
- let us know about a friend or neighbour who you think would benefit from a home visit to learn more about the services available to them. Call **020 7286 9226**
- join our tele-activity service if you have problems getting out and about. You can keep up with a group of friends or join a telephone session on keeping healthy, keeping safe or another topic of your choice. Call **020 8964 1900** for details.

Carolina Jones, 69, says: "I go to activities in lots of different



places to improve my health and meet friends. I like going to new places and learning new skills like cookery and computer classes so the new Community Hubs are great."

"I like learning new skills"



Evrol Puckerin, from Age Concern Westminster, runs information and advice sessions at Churchill Gardens Hall. He says: "A lot of people who come for advice want to know about the financial support available to them such as pension credit. I can help them to apply. Other popular requests are information on the befriending service, personal budgets and using the internet."

Call Age Concern Westminster on **020 3004 5610** to find more information about when and where the sessions are held.

Janet Bruderer,

76, says: "My friend already comes to breathing yoga so I decided to join in today. I also go to Tai Chi, knitting and coffee mornings."



Community Hub locations

- **Church Street**
Tel: **020 8391 2546**
- **Churchill**
Tel: **020 7976 6354**
- **Queen's Park and Harrow Road**
- **Westbourne**
Tel: **020 8964 1900**
(both of the above)

Activities, workshops and advice sessions will be available at community centres, libraries, leisure centres and other community locations in each of these areas.



Take a look at just some of the activities on offer

Church Street Community Hub

- Reflexology and massage, Tue, 1-4pm (book in advance on **020 8391 2546**), 60 Penfold Street, NW8 8PJ
- Exercise to music, Fri, 11am, 60 Penfold Street, NW8 8PJ

Churchill Community Hub

- Breathing Yoga, Wed, 2.15pm, Churchill Gardens Hall, SW1V 3AL
- Art for All, Wed, 12 midday, Thamesbank Centre, Peabody Avenue, Turpentine Lane, SW1V 4AR

Queen's Park and Harrow Road Community Hub

- Seniors online, Mon, 2pm, Maida Vale Library, Sutherland Avenue, W9 2QT (book on **020 7641 1300**)
- Social groups, Wed, 2pm, Juniper House, Fourth Avenue, Droop Street, W10 4QX

Westbourne Community Hub

- Beginners internet and email, Tue, 2.15pm, Paddington Library, Porchester Road, W2 5DU
- Salsa, Wed from 2pm, Warwick Community Centre, 300 Harrow Road, W2 5HG

Community Hub information and taster sessions took place over the summer. You told us the types of services you would like to see at the hubs and they will be reflected in the new timetable, available from October. Contact your local hub for full listings or visit www.westminster.gov.uk/communityhub.

Photo courtesy of Open Age



There may be a small cost depending on the activity. Contact each of the hubs for details.

My life in Westminster

Resident, Thomas Lovesey, tells us about his life, including his love of boxing, fighting in World War II and meeting his wife in Italy.



“My name is **Thomas Lovesey**, and I was born in 1924 in Westminster. As a boy I went to Westminster Cathedral School and lived on Pulford Street in Pimlico.

“When I was 12 I worked as a milk boy. We delivered to all sorts of interesting people, including Neville Chamberlain and Noël Coward. I left school at 14 and went straight to work at the Ministry of Food in the Social Security department.

“During the war I was a night fire watcher at Buckingham Gate. I had to snuff out the terrifying incendiary bombs with water from stirrup pumps before they hit the ground and exploded like fireworks.

“In 1943 when I was 18, I was called up for conscription. I fought in Italy under General Alexander. The Italians had surrendered so I thought it was going to be a holiday, but the German’s were still invading. Men around me were killed all the time and constant replacements were brought in.



“It was whilst I was in Italy that I met my wife Margherita and we married at the Pompeii Cathedral in 1946. I therefore have Mussolini to thank for meeting her!”

"It was whilst I was in Italy that I met my wife Margherita and we married at the Pompeii Cathedral in 1946. I therefore have Mussolini to thank for meeting her! We had a daughter and son, and we called them Margherita and Tom after us.

"After Italy we moved backed to the Tachbrook Estate where I got a job as a scaffolder. It was hard work and there were a lot of accidents in those days, so I was happy to leave and get a job in the Cabinet Office of the Civil Service, where I worked for 30 years. I met all the Ministers of the time and was highly commended for my work. I also coached at the Civil Service and Westminster Boxing Clubs which received many awards and achievements over the years.

"I worked until I was 85, and I am still pretty healthy. It can get lonely at night since Margherita died last year, but I still get out and about. I also help out at my granddaughter's husband's boxing club when I can. It runs every Friday and uses non-contact boxing to help kids stay out of trouble.

"I know a lot about Westminster after living here for so long, and it's great to have the chance to share my story with others."



If you have a story to tell about your life in Westminster, email westminsterplus@westminster.gov.uk.

The boxing club takes place at the Holy Apostles Church, Pimlico, and is funded by the council, supported by the Safer Neighbourhood Team and many of the coaches are serving police officers. Contact Alan Boyd on **07920 813 018** to find out more.



Did you know...
...there are over 15 leisure centres across Westminster?
Visit westminster.gov.uk/active


City of Westminster

A weekend of FREE sport and leisure

Head to your local leisure centre on the 19th and 20th of November for a weekend of FREE activities. There will be a wide variety of taster sessions available, from swimming to yoga. To find out what's on and where, contact your local leisure centre, call **020 7641 2012** or visit www.westminster.gov.uk/activeweekend.

About DIABETES

Diabetes is a long-term condition caused by too much glucose in the blood, which occurs when there is not enough insulin in the body.

The main symptoms are:

- feeling very thirsty
- going to the toilet a lot
- extreme tiredness
- weight loss.

You may be able to reduce your chances of diabetes by:

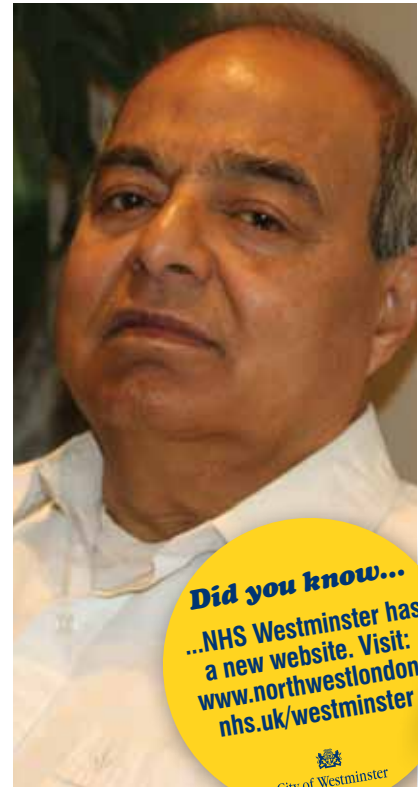
- losing weight
- exercising
- not smoking
- moderating alcohol intake.

Residents who are diagnosed with diabetes in Westminster are often referred to the Westminster Diabetes Centre, which runs a 6-week X-PERT Diabetes Programme.

Westminster resident **Mr Kamalesh Malaker** was diagnosed with diabetes eight months ago following a routine check-up with his GP.

He says: “When I was diagnosed I was prescribed tablets and advised to change my food habits – for example I’m not allowed to eat sugary food but fruit is allowed. Since then my condition has become stable.

“I was told that if I hadn’t found out it could have led to a heart attack or stroke. Being diagnosed hasn’t had a negative impact on my life, but it definitely could have if it wasn’t spotted and treated.”



Did you know...
...NHS Westminster has a new website. Visit:
www.northwestlondon.nhs.uk/westminster


City of Westminster

If you are experiencing any symptoms or would like to be tested for diabetes, book an appointment with your GP. Visit **www.northwestlondon.nhs.uk/westminster** or call PALS, the Patient Liaison Service on **0800 587 8818** to find out more about the condition.

Changes to care

Find out about adult social care changes in Westminster and how they may affect you.

Changes to day care services

Our consultation on day care services proposed developing a new resource centre for older people with dementia and their carers at 42 Westbourne Park Road. We propose moving the Tresham Centre here and closing Elgin and Carlton Dene Centres.

We expect less people to use day care centres as those who are eligible for day care will move to personal budgets to pay for their care. This means they may choose to spend their budget on other services.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Health will make a decision in November. If you are affected by the changes, we will write to you. Information will also be available at www.westminster.gov.uk/dayservices.

Reapply for your Taxicard

Taxicards enable people with mobility problems to travel in black cabs at reduced fares. If you use the service, you need to reapply following changes to the application process. The changes will reduce the amount we spend on the service so it can continue for those who most need it. They are:

- a new financial assessment. Only people who can show they are on a low income will receive a Taxicard
- Taxicards will be given only to those who have a disability that makes it difficult for them to use public transport. We may invite you for an assessment by an Occupational Therapist.

These changes follow a consultation we carried out from April to June. All Taxicard members have been sent a new application form with full details.

For more information email taxicard@westminster.gov.uk, visit www.westminster.gov.uk/taxicard or call **020 7641 2266**.



Do you use your Taxicard to travel to hospital?

If so, we would like to find out more so we can work with the NHS to improve hospital transport.

If you would like to join in a discussion forum, please email taxicardviews@westminster.gov.uk

In the loop

Read all about the latest news and events in Westminster.



Golden Age Players

Could you be a star of the stage? Unleash your acting potential with The Golden Age Players, a friendly amateur dramatics group comprised entirely of members aged 60 plus. Group leader Barbara Tennenbaum writes the plays and can write a part to suit you, or you can even help out behind the scenes. All experiences are welcome. Their next performance 'The Headline' takes place on Wednesday 16th November.



When: Tuesdays from 12.30 – 4pm

Where: The Liberal Synagogue (opposite Lord's Cricket Ground), 28 St. John's Wood Rd, NW8 7HA

Call: 020 7286 1600

Cost: Free to join and £10 for the performance. All proceeds go to the Out and About Club for disabled people: www.oaa.co.uk.

Protect yourself from flu

Autumn is the time of year that residents aged 65 plus need to get their FREE annual flu vaccine. Book an appointment with your GP, practice nurse or your local pharmacist.

You should not have a flu vaccination if you have a serious allergy to hens' eggs or if you have had a serious reaction to a flu vaccination before.

Breathe easy

Breathe Easy Paddington holds a monthly meeting for anyone in Westminster affected by a lung condition. You can get mutual support, friendship, information and advice. Call **020 8446 3097/020 8830 3135** or email breatheasypaddington@talktalk.net to find out more.

When: Third Monday of the month

Where: 8th floor, Ada Court, 10-16 Maida Vale, W9 1TD

Time: 11am – 1pm



If in doubt, keep them out

Detective Chief Inspector Alexis Boon, Head of the Westminster Burglary Squad, is reminding local residents to take care before opening their door to strangers. Bogus callers succeed because they sound believable, so don't be fooled. Follow these simple steps:

- Always use a door chain or spy-hole to check who is calling before you open the door.
- Council workers and callers from utility companies will have identification cards. Make them show this, and then call the relevant company to check that they are genuine. Never use a number the caller provides you with.
- Make sure the caller waits outside while you do this - genuine callers will not mind waiting while you check.
- Treat every stranger with caution. If you are still worried, dial **999** immediately and ask for the police.

Be ready for the TV switchover

Between 4th-18th April 2012, all analogue televisions across the UK will be switched over to digital. This means that if your TV has the 5 standard channels via an aerial, you will need to buy a digital box or a new digital television. The benefits will include more channels and better reception.



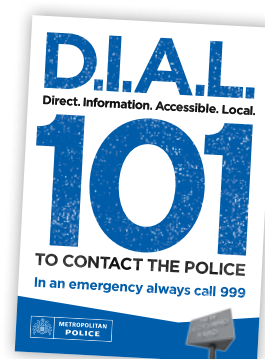
If you are already watching Freeview, Top Up TV or BT Vision, you will need to retune during the switchover dates in order to continue receiving all available channels. Cable and satellite services like SKY and Virgin Media are not affected by the switchover.

Call **08456 50 50 50** to find out more. There is also a BBC-run help scheme to support residents aged 75 plus during the switchover. Call **0800 40 85 900** for more details.

Dial 101

The 24/7 Metropolitan Police Service has launched a new **101** number to make it quicker and easier for you to get the service you need from them. Dial it to report a crime that has already happened, to seek crime prevention advice or to make the police aware of any issues in your local area.

Calling 101 when an immediate police response is not required helps keep 999 available for emergency calls. If a crime is taking place, or if somebody is in immediate danger, always call **999**. If you are deaf or have a speech impairment, a text phone is available on **18001 101**.



Delivered Meals

GREAT FOOD
GREAT VARIETY
DIRECT TO YOU



Sodexo delivered meals, delivers more than two million meals, every year direct to homes throughout the UK.

Our professional service is setting new quality standards for both hot and frozen home delivered meals.

We are confident that our meals and services will meet your standards and are happy to offer a money back guarantee if they do not.

Other Services



As part of all the services we offer when visiting your home our trained staff will carry out a general safe and well check to ensure you are managing adequately.

We are also able to offer a companionship service. Our friendly staff will come into your home and spend at least half an hour with you to simply talk, play a game or whatever meets your needs.

To find out about the other home based services that may be available in your area including but not limited to:

• **Ironing** • **Laundry** • **Cleaning** • **Gardening**

Please contact the number below and our staff will be happy to provide you with full details and prices.

020 7724 0463

sodexo
Making every day a better day

