



# OPEN AGE: NEW HORIZONS Members' Newsletter



Winter 2020 Issue No. 35

## Maggy helps raise funds

Colourful knitted goods, unique pieces of jewellery and delicious home-made cakes were on sale at the New Horizons Christmas Fair on November 29, with many members dropping in on their way to other classes and helping to raise £110 for the December 13 Christmas Party.

Among the stallholders was Open Age member and Vice-Chair of Trustees Maggy Pigott, who was selling copies of her book *How To Age Joyfully: Eight Steps to a Happier Fuller Life*. It was published in July 2019 by Summersdale Publishers, with 50 per cent of royalties going to Open Age.

The book, with a foreword by Dame Judi Dench, was inspired by Maggy's Twitter account, Age Joyfully @AgeingBetter, which gives positive information and advice and has an astonishing number of followers – 7000 and rising.

To her surprise, the book won a Platinum Award, garnered five-star reviews and is being published in the USA and Canada, with interest from Australia, New Zealand and Singapore.

Says Maggy: "I was thrilled to sell 16 books at the Fair and got lots of lovely feedback from members and tutors who had already bought and read it. Recently I was told it had sold about 1,500 copies, and sales increase every month.

"It's had great media coverage in a national newspaper, BBC Woman's Hour, Radio London, and about a dozen



Maggy and her book

magazines, and I've recorded podcasts and given talks – which is all very exciting, and great publicity for Open Age.

"All in all, it has been an incredible, surreal experience and so unexpected! I'm totally thrilled."

**FOR MORE ABOUT THE BOOK AND TWITTER, see page 5**

**ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THE AGM of OPEN AGE on WED 29 JAN 2020, from 1PM TO 3PM. It takes place at the NEW AVENUES CENTRE in THIRD AVENUE, WESTMINSTER. See also Page 2.**

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# Members' Information Day

An overview of Open Age and its activities was given by CEO Iain Cassidy on November 21, when he addressed a gathering of members in the Orangery Café at New Horizons.

In addition to New Horizons in Chelsea, the charity runs the Second Half Centre in North Kensington (St Charles), where its offices are based, and The New Avenues Centre in Third Avenue, Westminster, plus a hub at St Margaret's in South Westminster.

It also offers activities at more than 50 different venues in the community, bringing the total to around 400 each week. Of the charity's 4,500 active members, 78 per cent are female, 22 per cent male, and their ages range from 50 to 103.

Iain also spoke about funding – sources, priorities, future funding and increased needs – and outlined the new senior leadership structure of Open Age.

He introduced three managers with key roles who spoke about their roles – Bee Burgess, Deryn Bath and Jenny Marshall.

Bee is Outreach and Support Services Manager, responsible for Phone Club, Link Up, Men's Space, Time For Me and other social groups.

Deryn is Head of Physical Activity, overseeing both clinical exercise such as Steady and Stable, Healthy Lungs and Osteopathy, and general fitness and movement classes like Zumba, Ballet, Pilates and Boxing.

Jenny is Head of Member Experience, ensuring consistency across the organisation. She has worked for Open Age for six years, five of which were managing the Second Half Centre. Jenny also leads on the development and growth of the Open Age Arts and Culture strategy and associated partnerships.

In addition, two locality managers have been recruited. The first is Hervé Bessieres, who supervises Chelsea & South Kensington (including New Horizons), plus South Westminster (Victoria & Pimlico) – see page 3 for a profile of Hervé.

[The second, who started in December 2019, since the meeting on November 21, is Tina Lavenu, who oversees the provision in North Kensington and North Westminster, which includes the other two Open Age centres – the Second Half Centre and the New Avenues Centre.]

After the talks, there were questions, including one about the future of the café run by the Camden Society at New Horizons. Iain said that although the Camden Society was planning to close two of its centres, these were not in Chelsea and should not affect New Horizons.

Another question was about classes at New Horizons, including French and Spanish, guitar and ballet, which were withdrawn because of considerations of space, timing and funding. (French and Spanish are available at the Reed Centre.)

Following feedback and requests, Ballet Fitness has been reintroduced for 2020 and a new 'One You' service added to support general health and well-being.

Details of activities in Chelsea and Kensington from January 2020 onwards, including ACL and general classes and special trips, were emailed to members by Hervé on December 11, with details of the AGM, plus a letter from the CEO. If you did not receive this, or need a printed programme, please ask at reception.

If you can't find a class at New Horizons, check the other venues where courses may also be available to you.

**The AGM on Wednesday 29 January takes place at Open Age's New Avenues Centre in Third Avenue, Westminster, off the A404 Harrow Road, from 1 to 3pm. Refreshments included. Nearest tube stations: Queen's Park (also an overground station) and Westbourne Park. For bus routes, please see the posters in or around New Horizons reception.**

# Meet our Locality Manager

Since he joined the charity Open Age as the Locality Manager (south) in August 2019, Hervé Bessieres has had a busy time dealing with the various aspects of his newly created job followed the reorganisation of the management teams at each centre.

The plan is that he should spend two days a week at New Horizons in Chelsea, two days at St Margaret's in South Westminster and one day at St Charles Centre in North Kensington, supervising co-ordinators at each centre.



*Hervé Bessieres*

In addition, his job involves getting out and about promoting partnerships with local organisations and charities, attending networking meetings, researching new activities and sourcing new service providers. He is also responsible for the outreach centres in the south of the area.

But that plan was put on hold following the departure of Simon Shum and Serena Dicks in October, until new co-ordinators were appointed in November. He had help from temporary assistant Sara Ferreira, later confirmed as Centre Co-ordinator, and New Horizons now also has a Senior Co-ordinator in Paul McGowan.

Both will take charge of the day-to-day running, allowing Hervé to spend more time at St Margaret's helping former chef Hannah Munns, who is doing well as the senior co-ordinator at the centre.

"It has been challenging, but I was really happy to see how people at New Horizons rallied round to keep things going," says Hervé, who was born in Lyon, France.

"Some of the volunteers increased their hours, and some of my colleagues from St

Charles came over, so I was never on my own – someone was helping me every single day. My main plan now is to continue the legacy of growth and to provide a great service to all our members. It's very exciting!"

Hervé is a keen runner and enjoys outdoor pursuits such as hiking, scuba diving and swimming. He regularly partakes in running events throughout the year.

In 2020 he hopes to visit Indonesia to participate in the Borobodur Marathon, and also take his father and brother hiking in Scotland.

"Staying active physically and mentally is one of the most important things as you get older," says Hervé, who has visited New Horizons in the past and always liked the ethos of its parent body Open Age.

Hervé came to Britain in 1995 with a degree in international hotel management, planning to stay for just a year. But hotel work was not for him and he retrained as a complementary therapist, fitness instructor and cardiac rehab exercise specialist. He also worked as a therapeutic group facilitator helping people with alcohol and drug addiction.

Studying part-time, he gained a first class honours degree in nutritional medicine, and became a consultant nutritionist in private practice and a cardiovascular disease prevention specialist.

Before starting work with Open Age, Hervé was locality manager for the company Healthy Hearts, a free healthy lifestyle service for people at risk of cardiovascular disease, and also worked for One You Westminster, a company that promotes a longer healthier and happier life.

He explains: "My path has grown organically. I suppose my family has been an inspiration. The thread running through my career has been my passion for health and well-being. So working at Open Age is just right for me."



# Animal notes

HEDGEHOGS have been around for 15 million years, but do they risk extinction? 100,000 hedgehogs get squashed every year on the road. Building developments take their toll – for example, the HS2 railway line threatens to destroy the hedgehog sanctuary in Regent’s Park. Wildlife groups had warned that small animals get overlooked by existing signs. But now there’s good news – hedgehogs are getting their very own warning signs on certain roads in wildlife hotspots, similar to deer and cattle signposts. The Department for Transport hopes it will stop accidents and reverse decline.



Are the SQUIRRELS eating all the bird food you put out? One gardener recommends adding chilli powder to your bird seed. The RSPB says it's harmless to birds, but the squirrels can't deal with the hot spice and look elsewhere.

DOGS can raise their eyebrows. It has been found in a study at the University of

Portsmouth that dogs developed this habit to appeal to humans. Dogs also have an emotional response to humans close to them, reacting to angry faces and stress. Dogs try to help owners in distress and often rush to free a trapped and owner.

Have you heard of SNAIL glue? The University of Pennsylvania has been working on a glue based on the trail that snails leave behind. When you add water, the material remembers its original state, providing a bond released when

you pour water on it. The idea that water has a memory is the basis of homeopathic medicine – disputed for years, in spite of being used by the Queen.

DID YOU KNOW? Greater London has 3000 parks, and in July 2019 it was designated the world's first National Park City, to champion the benefits of the capital's great outdoors. Good news for people, plants and animals.

## Uppish about social media

I agree with historical novelist Antonia Fraser that touch typing is the most useful skill she ever learnt. (The next was learning to drive, which a kind friend painstakingly taught me). Antonia said learning to type was a punishment at her school for 'being uppish'. But the school did not realise it was actually helping to create a famous writer.

I find I am uppish when confronted with something new I don't really approve of. That means having to spell words out letter by letter on my iPhone. Slow!

When I am on the bus, I secretly admire the young girls who can hold a phone and type so quickly with both thumbs. I prefer to look at the diversity of life around me.

"These devices have reduced our

attention span to so many short pieces that we have lost the ability to stay focused on one train of thought for longer than a minute, which has very strong implications on the intellectual life of someone", according to author Rolf Dobelli in *The Art of the Good Life*.

"Never in the history of mankind have so many people compared themselves with others, and that causes misery. Do not buy into authenticity hype," he says. According to him, "it is an illusion to think you are connected to the world because you have 400 friends on Facebook; better to have 10 real friends. Modern life is not compatible with the good life."

*Yonita Fairfax*

# How to get fit at any age

TV star and fitness guru Mr Motivator, now 67, was horrified to hear that nearly eight out of 10 pensioners believe they're too old to keep fit – and he explains why everyone can be active with an exclusive workout for the Mirror newspaper.

He recommends a 10-min At-Home routine every day for a full-body boost that improves cardio fitness, strength and conditioning.

Each of the ten simple exercises takes one minute. All should be within the capabilities of a moderately fit older person, except perhaps for the wall squats!

The list is: 1 Arm circles 2 Positive perfecter 3 Wall squat 4 Leg kicks 5 Leg raises 6 Get marching 7 Tightrope walk



*Mr Motivator*

8 Balance booster 9 Balance improver 10 Chair crunches. Many can be done seated.

To try them, go to Mirror Online: <https://apple.news/Aj5zubK1OQtKXZp6z0zli9Q>

## How To Age Joyfully (continued from page 1)

Maggy started her Twitter account, Age Joyfully @AgeingBetter, because she wanted to publicise and celebrate the reality and positive aspects of ageing and there seemed to be a real lack of such accounts.

Her goal was 100 followers, but she currently has over 7,300 and it still grows weekly. She has set up another Twitter personal account called Maggy Pigott @MaggyPigott, which has over 2000 followers.

The eight steps described in the book are:

- 1 Move (stay active)
  - 2 Eat right
  - 3 Have a purpose
  - 4 Connect (with others)
  - 5 Grow (lifelong learning)
  - 6 Be grateful
  - 7 Give (eg. volunteer)
  - 8 Be positive
- with practical tips on how to achieve these, about 150 in all.

A former barrister, civil servant and chief executive, Maggy (CBE) first joined Open Age to learn ballet and Latin Dance for fitness, mental agility and fun.

In interviews, she said: “The book is about how we can age better and make the most of our longer lives.

“This recent passion has been largely inspired by my personal story and Open Age, which does so much to enhance later life.

“The first four steps are probably the most important, and the most important of all is the first – Move. All the steps actually interconnect.

“Not everybody is lucky enough to be able to be positive all the time. But there is an awful lot in those other steps that can help you.”

The book is available online or in bookshops. For more details, go into Maggy’s Twitter accounts, or inquire at reception.

# Lapada Art and Antiques Fair

Is anyone a collector? I saw such exquisite delights at Lapada Art and Antiques Fair, which celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2019, at Berkeley Square.



*Van Gogh in Arles by Alan Halliday, price £4,500*

The exemplary attention to detail of most of the exhibits is over-whelmingly

inspirational, and although art can never emulate nature, to live with such items of rare beauty would be such a privilege.

Obviously taste is subjective – what appeals to one will not appeal to another. I was much impressed by a portrait by Tina Spratt painted in the 1970s. This portrait was lovely – such attention to details, such realism. She trained at Wolverhampton University. It only goes to show that if one has natural ability one does not need the prestige of a famous London art school.

Not everything was selling for thousands

of pounds. I noticed a little oil painting of a humble apple – it was priced at £175. Not inconsequential, admittedly, in these difficult times, for such a modest subject, but collectible none the less.

Not all fell into the category of Fine Art. There was a lot of whimsy too – as, for example, the work of Alan Halliday.

The jewelry, glass, furniture, cartography, miniatures, carpets, Oriental art – all were a joy to visit and I thoroughly recommend the experience. See for yourselves the greatest collection of art and antiques from Britain's most trusted dealers, by going into the website [LAPADA.org](http://LAPADA.org).

I talked briefly to the fair's charity partner, Alexander McQueen's charitable foundation Sarabande. They aim to further the work of young artists and those interested in fashion. I pointed out that the over-50s too have lots to contribute to art and design and the future of young people.

*Olive D Hall*

## Horticulture and art

Horticulture can provide comfort to life's mental pressures. In 1978, what we know as Thrive was set up – a charity that uses gardening to help people with disabilities or ill health. Its research shows social and therapeutic horticulture can reduce stress and anxiety.

I once went on a course at the Design Museum of Kensington which had invited members of Open Age, to take part, and as a result I was offered a painting course in France.

I found myself tutored by a lady who had won horticultural drawing prizes. On a remote hillside near the Pyrenees, where the mist hung heavily every morning, I copied a passion flower that grew up the wall.

I drew it waking from its dewy bud and again as it closed up every evening, showing the cycle of life.



*Passion flowers*

That first morning, I found the class silently attentive. Art is serious in the horticultural world and I was to draw an artichoke. Just

up my street – as I am a great believer in sacred geometry and the Fibonacci series.

This is a system whereby nature has organised growth along thirds – any photographer will tell you that your pictures look best when the focal point is at a third of your screen.

The 1.618 mathematical ratio behind growth was discovered by the Italian Fibonacci, born c. 1175–1250, as the ratio of growth in nature – artichokes, flowers and humans. November 23 is celebrated as Fibonacci Day, because when written 11/23, the sequence is shown.

*Yonita Fairfax*



# Winter in the Scottish Highlands

Christmas and the winter period conjure different images for different people. For me, the beautiful Highlands of Scotland, crisp minus temperatures, snow-laden trees and the warm loving smile of my mother are where my memories remain.

The area has breathtaking scenery. The magnificent glens with rolling hills and snow-topped mountains, are home to red deer, red squirrels, polecats and stoats. Wildcats still roam in the remote areas. Temperatures often drop to minus 12, but the freezing conditions still look stunning as the sun glistens through the snow.

Our family relocated to the village of Newtonmore in the mid-1980s. My mother and stepfather were both managers at British Rail but after several holidays to the Spey Valley and the Central Highlands, they decided to sell up and buy a sprawling 10-bedroomed Victorian house with a fantastic history, and run it as a guest house. The location was spectacular, just a minute's walk from the magnificent Glen Banchor, and it had half-an-acre of land around it.

Newtonmore is ideally located on a crossroads linking the north, south and west of Scotland. Just 14 miles from Aviemore, and the ski grounds of the Cairngorms, its beauty is recognised far and wide. In recent years, the popular television programme *Monarch of the Glen* was filmed in and around the village.

However, it was also the history of the house that helped us decide to buy. Now known as Alder Lodge, the original title deeds showed the house was built for Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, Britain's first female surgeon and first female Mayor. She bought the house, then known as Alde Cottage, to entertain her suffragette friends.

Diaries reveal that the famous Emmeline Pankhurst was a great friend of Elizabeth's and spent a few weeks there each summer. Suffragette meetings were held in the front drawing room, which 80 years later became our sitting room.

It was also written that Britain's first



*Alder Lodge in Scotland*

female chauffeur, dressed in a navy blue long skirt and jacket, drove Mrs Pankhurst all the way from her London residence to the Highland retreat. I often wonder how many days that journey must have taken, and what an adventure it must have been.

I love the knowledge that such important ideas and strategies for change were debated with passion in the rooms of our home. If only walls could speak!

My parents ran the business until 2005, after which they sold and bought a lovely little cottage called Kosey Korner, still in Newtonmore. Now in their 80s, they lead a quieter life but have fond memories of the 20 years they owned the house and the many visitors from all over the world.

My husband and I moved with them in 1985 to help set up the business and stayed there for a year, after which we returned to London. My son Tarik was born there in 1986, a beautiful Caledonian Highland baby, born to an English mother and a Moroccan father – the first baby born to our Kaidi clan!

I continue to visit every few months. The lochs, the glens, the forests and the wildlife all hold a special place in my heart. That warm Christmas glow, mulled wine and mince pies, glistening snow capped mountains, and stunning scenery for as far as the eye can see, is never quite the same anywhere else.

*Susan Kaidi*

# The value of lipreading

Since she first joined it 18 months ago, Audrey Brindley has become a big fan of the New Horizons lip-reading class, which runs for two hours every Wednesday afternoon at the Cadogan Street centre.

She has only 25 per cent of hearing in one ear, and none in the other, so relies largely on lipreading and body language, especially as her eyesight makes reading difficult.

The retired publisher and events organiser, who used to spend nine months of the year travelling abroad, lost her hearing in 2006 when her diabetes tablets were changed. The result was vertigo, and eventually sudden hearing loss.

But now the class has really helped, especially as the teacher Jacques prepares lessons in detail to make them topical and interesting.

“Our tutor is excellent – he has a lot of patience and takes a lot of trouble,” says Audrey, who shares the class with around seven other students, including a former teacher, a former actress, a former librarian and a former journalist.

“He explains everything in a way that



older people, who forget a lot, can understand. People nowadays don't always form their words clearly.

“It also helps that we have such a nice group. We meet for

coffee beforehand in the café, and that means we know each other socially, so you don't feel stupid if you don't know something. You don't feel like a kid in school.”

Audrey has studied computing and taken a few Reiki sessions at New Horizons, but she finds this class the most useful. She recommends it to anyone who finds they are losing their hearing.

She explains: “It's affordable for everyone, and a reason to come out and mix with people. I live in a south London borough, but there is nothing like this there, and it would probably be very expensive.

“Where else can you go for two hours a week for £3?”

*Kay Shelley*

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## Welcome to Book Break!

Book Break is a popular class which runs for two hours on Monday afternoons at New Horizons and involves shared reading chosen by tutor Ghada Gaylani.

The group, including many whose first language is not English, usually take turns reading from a book, a play or a short story, followed by discussion. After a break for a cuppa, the class ends with the reading of a poem.

Ghada says that there's no obligation to read aloud, but those who wish to do so are more than welcome. Around 10 to 13 attend, but it is first come, first served, as the upstairs room at New Horizons is fairly small.

She explains: “The novels, plays and poems are from classic or award winning writers. When we finish a novel, we usually read some short stories or choose a play.

“The group enjoy coming to the class

and look forward to attending every week, and those who have not been keen on poems in the past are now beginning to like reading them!

“Some have even gone on to join another Book Break group at North Westminster on Tuesday mornings. The group is friendly and informal and afterwards many go out for socialising and a further cup of tea!”

One of the regulars is Amalia Grischott-Gomez, born in Colombia, who considers the Book Break group “a bit like a little family”.

“The readings are food for thought and inspiring,” she says. “The classes are full of discussion, dialogue, interaction – they bring us together.

“We have great fun, all because our leader is very special and we are most grateful to her.”



## Do you care for a relative, friend or neighbour?

Time For Me is a support and activities project run by Open Age for people who are caring for a friend, neighbour or family member with an illness, disability or mental health problem or addiction.



*Vennetta Royal*

It provides an interesting programme of trips, outings, events and opportunities to socialise while meeting other carers.

Vennetta Royal, who joined Open Age in February 2019 as a Time For Me Co-ordinator and who covers South Kensington and Chelsea, is busy developing and expanding the activities and always welcomes more members. Over 150 are registered, but there could be others who do not realise they are carers, especially if they are looking after a partner at home.

“The idea is to meet other carers, share ideas and experiences, and provide activities to reduce isolation and loneliness,” says Vennetta.

“Some of our members don’t go out much and may feel alone, but we inform them of activities and encourage them to join us and make new friends. They may not realise they are eligible for a carers’ allowance, but the local Carers’ Network can help them to complete a carers assessment and apply.”

“What we offer is based on what members want to do – they can just book a place and have a break from their daily lives.”

Recent outings have included a seaside trip to Bournemouth, a visit to Sissinghurst Gardens in Kent, the occasional cinema visit, and tours of museums, galleries and exhibitions. In October members went to see the Tina Turner show, and in November they visited the Mary Quant V&A exhibition.

Outings usually attract 8–10 people, but if there is a coach trip, as many as 45 unpaid carers take part.

Vennetta is based at Open Age’s St Charles Centre, North Kensington, from Monday to Wednesday, but on the first Tuesday of each month she comes to New Horizons in Chelsea to run an afternoon carers’ group in the café for chats, discussion, fitness sessions or creative activities. Each month has a different focus.

Although she formerly taught English as a second language in schools and colleges for 15 years in the UK and Japan, Vennetta is also a qualified Qi Gong teacher and Shiatsu therapist who does facial and ear



*Emirates cable car outing*

acupuncture. The two-hour drop-in group sometimes includes a little Qi Gong exercise and shiatsu for carers unable to attend regular scheduled classes.

“The carers’ group is fairly new, so we would like to build it up. People don’t have to book – they can just turn up when they want,” said Vennetta. “We are also available if anyone wants to talk to us on the phone for advice or a chat.”

If anyone is not on Time For Me’s register but feels they might be eligible, they can contact Vennetta or her colleague Liz Butters on their office number, – 0208 962 4536 – and leave a message, or email her on: [VRoyal@openage.org.uk](mailto:VRoyal@openage.org.uk)

# This Girl Can – and so can Open Age!

Watching Wimbledon or *Strictly Come Dancing* on TV is the nearest some of us get to being sporty. But the message now is – get involved.

In 2015 Sport England launched their This Girl Can campaign, to encourage women of all shapes, sizes and abilities to get more active, raise their heart rates and improve their general fitness through sport.

The campaign was based on the idea that the fear of judgement by others is the primary barrier holding women back from participating in sport.

The first TV ad was aired in January 2015, with cinema, outdoor, and social media advertising, which included a Twitter campaign using the hashtag *#thisgirlcan*.

Funded by the National Lottery, the campaign involved nearly three million women, in everything from aerobics, swimming and jogging to gym work and dancing. One of the most popular activities was Zumba – or the less strenuous Zumba Gold workout.

For anyone who hasn't tried it, Zumba involves Latin music, including samba, mambo and salsa, plus belly-dancing, hip hop and martial arts moves, woven together for fun and fitness.

Initially the campaign aimed to reach those aged 14–40. The second phase was

launched in January 2017, as part of efforts by Sport England to get more women in their 50s and 60s exercising regularly. The four-week campaign featured poster sites, social media, and TV ads.

The BBC Sports website gives lots of ideas. These include sports that may appeal to older men and women, such as badminton, bowls, golf, swimming, table tennis, walking and yoga. Or you can consult the website [www.thisgirlcan.co.uk](http://www.thisgirlcan.co.uk)

But you don't have to travel far to find ways of getting active. Open Age has lots of fitness-based classes right here in Kensington & Chelsea – check out the New Horizons activity programme available at reception or by email.

Last term it listed Pilates, Pranayama Breathing Yoga, Kundalini Yoga, Zumba, Fitness Aerobics, Dancercise, Chair Yogalates, Flow Yoga, Chi Gong, Line Dancing, Stretch & Tone Fitness, and Legs, Bums & Tums multi-exercise classes.

For more activities, including Bokwa, Latin American dance, Tai Chi, table tennis, salsa, and even tennis, cycling and boxing, check out the programmes at Open Age's other centres – especially the Second Half Centre in North Kensington. And check noticeboards and posters for updates.

## News of past staff

Members of New Horizons received Christmas and New Year greetings from two former members of staff – Simon Shum and Carly Beck, who both now work for the national charity Age UK.

NH Programme, Skills and IT Coordinator Simon left on 4 October to become Community Services Manager for Age UK, based across three boroughs in East London. He also oversees a team for residents and workers in the City of London, in partnership with the City of London Corporation.

He recently set up 30 corporate volunteers from HSBC to deliver afternoon tea and goody bags containing winter things like soup, hats, gloves etc. He emailed: "Hope you have a good Xmas and NY, miss everyone at New Horizons, say hi from me and will hope to visit soon!"

Carly left New Horizons in April 2019 to return to her native West Country, but since November is back in London. She has a new job with Age UK as Care and Home Service Manager.

If anyone has news of other former members of staff, let the newsletter team know.





# Here come the stand-up comics!

Buffet food, music, singing and dancing are the staples of the New Horizons Christmas party (see below and right), but this year there was extra entertainment – stand-up comedy performed by members.

Some of them had appeared in October at Imperial College's Invention Rooms Café, as part of a National Theatre research project into the comedic writing skills of older local residents to showcase the benefits of laughter on the health, well-being and confidence of older people.

But as well as the Stand Up for the Over



50s, a few extra members braved the stage with their jokes in December. New Horizons Senior Co-ordinator Paul McGowan acted as master of ceremonies.

Head of Member Experience Jenny Marshall said: "People wrote their own scripts, and the audience loved it – it was amazing. Before this project, many people might not have felt able to try stand-up."

The raffle organised by Daphne Morgan to help fund the party raised over £100.

**Editor:** Kay Shelley. **Contributors** include: Maggy Pigott, Iain Cassidy, Hervé Bessieres, Yonita Fairfax, Olive D Hall, Susan Kaidi, Ghada Gaylani, Amalia Grischott-Gomez, Margaret Porta.

**Designer:** Christabel Gurney. **NH staff:** Hervé Bessieres, Paul McGowan, Sara Ferreira, Vennetta Royal, Jenny Marshall.

The New Horizons Members' Newsletter is written and edited by volunteers meeting in the I.T. room every Wednesday, 10am–12noon, and printed and distributed by staff at New Horizons. The Newsletter online can be viewed (or downloaded) at <https://www.openage.org.uk/new-horizons> (see under Activities). To contribute, please email: [kayonhold@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:kayonhold@hotmail.co.uk), or text Kay Shelley (07748 662213).

New Horizons is a pioneering activity centre for older people delivered by a consortium of three charities, Open Age, Age UK Kensington and Chelsea and the Guinness Trust, in partnership with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and NHS Kensington and Chelsea.

Lead organisation: Open Age, Registered Charity No 1160125.

**Open:** Monday–Friday 9.30am–4.00pm

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[www.facebook.com/newhorizonschelsea](https://www.facebook.com/newhorizonschelsea)