

Why we became volunteers...

I chose to become a volunteer at Age Concern Westminster after the death of my husband four years ago. Not wanting to go back to full time employment I decided to give back something to the community. This has benefited me greatly as not only have I been able to help others but it has added an extra social dimension to my life, and is always a pleasure to meet other colleagues at the office.

By Elizabeth Ingram (Receptionist at Edgware Rd)

I chose to be a volunteer at Age Concern Westminster because I want to make a difference in older people's lives. I meet the most amazing people when I do befriending or handyman jobs for them. During my nine months here I have gained a lot of experience from my Managers who have trained me to be a befriender, handyman and an assistant to the Home Services co-ordinator dealing with new applications for volunteers. Helping older people to live a better life is the most exciting experience of all. I think more people should volunteer, it makes a huge difference in other people's lives.

By Amidu Tholley (Home Services Assistance)

Peace of Mind

For many people, organising and paying for a funeral in advance reduces stress and worry. For more information about our Low Cost Funeral Plans - Contact Volunteers Elizabeth Ingram and Fifi Nouss at our Edgware Road Office every Wednesday from 9:30am to 1pm.

Telephone: 020 7724 6930

Email: eingram@acwestminster.org.uk

rnouss@acwestminster.org.uk

FEEDBACK

We welcome your feedback. If you have any issues you would like to see raised in *Platinum Age* please do not hesitate to contact us at the address below:

Age Concern Westminster

268-272 Edgware Road

London W2 1DS

Phone: 020 7724 6930

Fax: 020 7723 0405

Email: enquiries@acwestminster.org.uk



Starbucks & Tesco

Raise £500

Over the Christmas period Starbucks staff collected outside our Edgware Road Shop. ACW Staff and volunteers collected outside Tesco's in St John's Wood, Sutherland Avenue and Clifton Road. In total these collections raised £500 for us. A big THANK YOU to everyone who participated.

S.A.ying Goodbye!

After five years of hard work our South African colleague Louise Gilmour is leaving us. Louise has been a committed member of the team and a good friend to many of us. She will be sorely missed by us all. We would like to take this opportunity to wish Louise all the best in her new job in Kingston and in her future life back in South Africa with her husband, Duncan (another ex ACW employee).

Good Bye and Good Luck (Totsiens, alle voorspoed).

Coming soon...

Platinum Age Volunteer Award.

You will be able to nominate a Volunteer, for the Volunteer award in each issue of the Platinum Age. Each lucky recipient will receive £25.

Nomination forms will be available with the next issue.

Volume 3, issue 3



Platinum Age

February 2008

60th Anniversary



Our Diamond Jubilee fundraising dinner & dance extravaganza was held at the Corus Hotel in Bayswater on Friday 1st February 2008, where 90 guests raised over £4000 to provide valued services and assistance for older people locally. After the three course meal and fundraising events guests danced the night away to Greg's Disco. The evening, organised by Leonora Club Manager Sandra Stamou, was successful and amazing fun.

ACW Chairman Anne Mallinson commented 'It was a lot of work, but the result was spectacular.'

Lianne Joy, Deputy Chief Executive of Age Concern Westminster said 'The evening was wonderful and it was great to see so many people supporting the event whilst helping raise money for Age Concern Westminster'.



Corus Hotel Bayswater Road

50 for Christmas Lunch at Elgin

At 9am on a cold and wet Christmas Day, 15 of us started our preparations for what was to be a fabulous lunch for 50 guests, who would otherwise have been alone on Christmas Day. The highlight of the eventful morning was the person who set off the fire alarm at Dora House by burning incense in their room. Our poor volunteer driver Mark and escort, Kirsty, were stuck at Dora for nearly an hour until the fire brigade declared the building safe for people to go back in, lock their flats and leave for lunch.

Upon arrival, guests were greeted by volunteers with sherry and sat down for a pre-Christmas lunch chat. The wonderful lunch was cooked by Richard and served by our volunteers armed with wine and apple juice.

After a choice of delicious Christmas pudding or trifle, our guests received Christmas presents kindly donated by staff from local businesses, before departing home.

The evening highlight was watching 81-year-old long standing volunteer, Hector Munsiff, get off the minibus at Selfridges, turning to his right and putting one hand in the air whilst nonchalantly sauntering across Oxford Street. Halfway across, he turned to his left and did the same, without a backward glance to us. Hector then disappeared with his assortment of bags into the side streets of Mayfair on his way home.

Martin Davies



Christmas Lunch at the Elgin Centre

Reaching U In Action

The Reaching U Project goes from strength to strength providing a range of activities and classes for the Over 50s in the City of Westminster. In Term One, the partnership between Age Concern Westminster, Open Age and Westminster Adult Education Service offered 36 activities in a variety of venues. Term Two began in January 2008 with a new programme in place, the content of which has been developed in consultation with participants.

Reaching U regular, Anne Walker said 'The activities have made a great difference to my life and I could not imagine being without them'.



Line Dancing in action at the Leonora Club

The project has been promoted across the city, with articles in the Westminster Plus and local papers.

ACW supports Staff to achieve Worklife balance

Through a contract with Worklife Support, ACW staff can access support, information, specialist advice and counselling services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, whether to help plan for the future or manage any issues they face.

Employees (and their immediate family household members) can call the service *for free*, at a time that suits them to receive:

Financial advice on a range of matters including mortgages, pensions and taxation.

Debt counselling offering assistance to those with multiple debts.

Legal advice through qualified and experienced solicitors, on all personal legal issues.

CAB-style information on a wide range of issues including consumer enquiries, tenancy matters and information about state benefits and entitlement.

General support and information offering guidance on subjects such as becoming a carer, education options for a child, moving house or approaching retirement.

Professional guidance and advice on anything from managing workload or preparing for a difficult meeting to career development opportunities.

A limited number of **face-to-face counselling sessions**.

Specialist support for managers - managers can receive specialist support through the EAP's Management Consultation service (available from 8am to 6pm). Experienced managers are there to offer coaching advice on any management issue, such as tackling difficult behaviour or supporting a team through a difficult change.

Online access to support is now only a click away.

Please log on at www.worklifesupport.com/onlinesupport (user name **worklife**; password **support 1**).

Free, confidential support and advice for you and your immediate family, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year: **0800 371 540**

ACW Nails the Pilot



Age Concern Westminster is working with Westminster Primary Care Trust to pilot a three month social nail cutting service. This service will complement the podiatry service at Westminster PCT by offering an appointment in between regular visits to the podiatrist.

There is a charge of £10 per visit which includes assessment, treatment and nail cutting instruments. The service will benefit the over 50s in Westminster, especially those who have a problem cutting their own nails but don't qualify under clinical need. Through this service, we aim to:

- ◆ improve access to social nail care for older people
- ◆ improve choice without reducing eligibility
- ◆ provide nail care in a social setting
- ◆ assist the podiatry service to be more responsive to people with more urgent need.
- ◆ reduce feelings of distress.

The pilot will start in **March 2008**. More information can be obtained from the Director of Day Services Lianne Joy on: **020 7724 6930** or by emailing: nailcutting@acwestminster.org.uk



Westminster older residents now have HOPE



On Tuesday 29th January 2008 the report on the findings and recommendations of the Helping Older People's Empowerment Project (HOPE) was launched at the Lord Mayor's Parlour, City Hall.

The Lord Mayor of Westminster, Councillor Carolyn Keen welcomed all guests and congratulated those volunteers who had taken part in the gathering of information on the views of older people in Westminster.



HOPE participants

Clockwise to left:
Betty Toomey, Pauline Stevens,
Gwen Gander and Helen Moule

The HOPE report was presented by Martin Davies, Chief Executive of Age Concern Westminster, who chaired the HOPE Advisory Group and Isobel Hunter, one of the HOPE Volunteers.

The HOPE report highlights the needs of older people as expressed by themselves. The findings and recommendations in the report will be available to local policy makers to implement in the development of local services.