



Pandemic Survival Guide December 2020

Positive Ageing In London has put together this Survival Guide for older people living in London. The guide consists of useful information collated from around the internet, some of which has been shared amongst the PAiL community and committee members in previous newsletters and campaigns. It is created to provide a directory of useful links with tips and guides that assist older people during this immensely challenging pandemic period. The guide is broken down into these sections:

- Staying physically healthy
- NHS Information
- Staying Mentally healthy
- Things to do (Ways in Which to Stay Involved from Home)
- What You Can do in Your Locality / Community
- How to Stay Safe at Home / When Going Out
- Links - Good News Stories, Campaigns, Sources of Help, Things to do, Ways to Stay in touch

The BBC has produced a short video explaining the special rules that apply over Christmas and gives practical advice. See [here](#)

Staying Physically Healthy

Six ways to Improve Your Wellbeing

We are pleased to let you know that the GLA has heeded our advice and lobbying to provide printed information about keeping well at this time. The information applies to all older people across London and the GLA have now produced a set of postcards 'Six ways to improve your wellbeing'. See the link below:

<https://thriveldn.co.uk/resources/Six-ways-to-improve-your-wellbeing/>



Vitamin D

Vitamin D is important for good bone and muscle health. Public Health England recommends that older people take a supplement of 10 micrograms (400 IU) of vitamin D every day between October and March. It is particularly important this winter as most of us have spent more time than usual indoors over the past year.

2.5 Million people who are considered clinically vulnerable will receive an offer of a free supply delivered to their home. See more in this BBC report [here](#)



Healthy Living at Home Booklet

Manchester University have teamed up with 'Healthy Ageing Research Group', AGE UK and others to create this booklet about keeping well at home during the pandemic. The information inside was originally created for the people of Greater Manchester and includes some local links and information, but the vast majority of the contents can be just as useful for older Londoners.

Greater Manchester booklet [display.aspx \(manchester.ac.uk\)](https://manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx)



Advice on Physical Wellbeing

This report, conducted by the Centre for Ageing Better and the Physiological Society takes you through a study on “Improving the health and Wellbeing of Older People during the Pandemic”. It’s quite a long read, but if you have the time to go through it all it is a comprehensive study understanding the challenges that older people face and potential benefits of maintaining health regimens during periods of isolation and restricted mobility. There is also information on how to recover from the virus should you get it and general discussion on the risks and public health recommendations.

[A-National-Covid-19-Resilience-Programme-report-web-version.pdf \(physoc.org\)](#)



Advice on Eating

Is this me? By the Malnutrition Task force is an information campaign to help you understand if you are suffering from malnutrition. Whether you have unexpectedly lost weight recently or are feeling more lethargic or tired than usual, the explanation may be that you are malnourished. This guide helps explore the warning signs to look out for, and what to do if you become malnourished.

[Is this me? | Malnutrition Task Force](#)



Staying Active

We teamed up with our partners AGE UK last year for our [Park Walks](#) campaign. The information in the campaign has since been updated in line with the changing times. The link provided offers you some alternatives to stay active (mentally and physically) as much as you can during this time with links to further reading about staying active through walking and enjoying green spaces.



<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/london/projects-campaigns/age-friendly-campaigns/afl-campaigns/2019/park-walks/>

The NHS



Vaccinations

The BBC have put together some information about who will be getting access to the new COVID vaccinations first and how the process will be. See the availability for different groups [LINK HERE](#)

Accessing GP Services

The NHS have made this video about accessing your GP services. It gives you tips on how to use digital devices and make telephone consultations, answering some of the anxieties of visiting your GP:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXHPWbEmp5s&feature=emb_title&ab_channel=NHSEnglandandNHImprovement

Fight the flu

Covid-19 and the flu virus are both in circulation this winter. It is vital, now more than ever, for as many eligible people as possible to get their free flu vaccination in order to protect themselves and those around them. It takes up to two weeks for the flu vaccine to fully protect you from the flu virus once you have had the jab, so get your appointment organised as soon as possible at your GP surgery or your local Pharmacy. Age UK London has launched the "Now More Than Ever" campaign to promote vaccination. It will target the boroughs in North and Northwest London (where uptake is especially low) as well as older BAME people. Feel free to share the resources from Age UK London's website:

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/london/projects-campaigns/flu-campaign-2020-21/>

Age UK London can also send you posters, flu information toolkits and social media resources. They are also happy to attend meetings and run flu information sessions for your groups and organisations across London – contact Sharon at Age UK London stynan@ageuklondon.org.uk

Diabetes Care for Older People During this Time

Medscape have written a piece about the challenges that people with Diabetes have faced during this Pandemic, with the disease disproportionately taking the lives of those with the underlying health condition of Diabetes. The piece looks to understand the dangers and put forward ideas and challenges of how to better prepare in future and better protect those who are more vulnerable because of diabetes.

[Lessons From COVID-19 Need to Be Learned for Diabetes Care \(medscape.com\)](https://www.medscape.com)



Effects of Long Covid and help

Are you a long COVID sufferer? There is more and more information coming out about helping with recovery for those who've suffered from COVID over a long period of time [About - Long Covid](#)

The effects of suffering from COVID can take a long time to disappear with significant health problems experienced. The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy have produced a helpful animation to keep you active and rebuild your strength -



<https://www.csp.org.uk/public-patient/covid-19-road-recovery>.

Make sure you know how to get a COVID test. Although we've read a lot about delays in getting COVID tests, it's important we all know how to apply for one [CLICK HERE FOR LINK](#)

How to Access Health Services if you Have a Long Term Condition

AGE UK have put together a guide for those who may be more vulnerable to COVID. If you have an existing medical condition or you become unwell you might be particularly worried about how to access treatment, medication and appointments. Here's what you need to know. [LINK HERE](#)



Staying mentally healthy

World Health Organisation Advice

We start this section with the World Health Organisation's dashboard for all things mental health. This is a good place to start learning about how to care for yourself and your mental health. The website takes you through different conditions and how to spot them as well as resolutions and advice in the form of the WHO response.

<https://www.who.int/health-topics/mental-health>



Keeping in Touch With People

With the Pandemic continuing through the winter we will still most probably be seeing less of each other face to face until spring. If you are struggling with loneliness and would like to speak to somebody new, just for a conversation, you could contact a befriending service. Age UK and The Silver Line offer free telephone friendship services so you can enjoy chatting with someone over the phone. Below is the telephone number for Silverline or alternatively you can see more about the AGE UK service by clicking the link [here](#)

More Helpful tips about preventing loneliness are here:

<https://www.which.co.uk/news/2020/06/loneliness-prevention-tips-for-older-people-during-lockdown/>

Practical help during December in overcoming loneliness:

<https://letstalkloneliness.co.uk/story/staying-connected-this-winter/>



ThriveLDN: Mental wellbeing

These are challenging times. It is normal and OK to feel upset, anxious or confused. ThriveLDN, which is the citywide movement supported by the Mayor of London and the London Health Board to improve the mental health and wellbeing of all Londoners, have produced a range of resources that you may find useful. See more [here](#)



Good Thinking

Good Thinking is a NHS approved mental wellbeing service that includes specific help for: Parents and Carers; Children and Young People; Healthcare Professionals and Employers. As well as this you can find advice on a range of issues including anxiety, sleep and low mood and you can even conduct your own self assessment to better understand what is going on in your own brain. Follow the link [here https://www.good-thinking.uk/](https://www.good-thinking.uk/)



Helping with Dementia during This Time

South London's Health Innovation Network has produced a useful guide on activities for those with or caring for people with dementia. This resource has been compiled by the Health Innovation Network (HIN), the Academic Health Science Network for south London, to support the provision of activities in older adult's mental health inpatient settings and Care Homes during the national response to Covid 19. With staff likely to be in significantly reduced numbers and residents/patients unable to receive visitors, the challenge was to create a list of options predominantly using online, low/zero cost resources for staff to use for activities in their setting.

<https://healthinnovationnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Maintaining-Activities-for-Older-Adults-during-COVID19.pdf>



Things to do, Ways to Stay Involved From Your Home

AGE UK: Ways of helping others from your armchair

As people get older, some may find they spend more time on their own. This can sometimes feel lonely, boring or make people miss friends or family. Now you can volunteer to become a telephone befriender for AgeUK and The Silver Line (as seen above). Just 30 minutes of your time a week could make a massive difference to an older person's life. If you're empathetic and good at talking on the phone, you could be a Telephone Friendship Service volunteer. See more [here](#)



Samaritans

Help people through difficult times by training to become a Listening Volunteer for the Samaritans. Listening volunteers are there for anyone who needs someone. They spend over one million hours responding to calls for help each year and they can change the course of someone's life. See more [here](#)



Participate in Research

Scientists are continuing to learn about the coronavirus. It is very important that older people are included in research as we are statistically more likely to suffer serious consequences. If you have a smartphone, you can contribute by downloading the Covid Symptom Study app and report on your health every day; it only takes a minute. Information is collated anonymously for research purposes.



Caring For Our Carers

With shielding continuing over winter, virtual activities are still important. Caring for our carers: report calls for investment in digital tech to support unpaid carers. Caring during this time: Challenges and opportunities for digitally supporting carers, sets out key recommendations to assist Local Authorities in caring for their carers; by facilitating ways the caring community can maintain its vital network of peer support during a national emergency.

<http://circle.group.shef.ac.uk/2020/11/09/caringforourcarersnov20/>



Vegetarian for Life

Vegetarian for Life, a UK charity, set up exclusively for the benefit of older vegetarians and vegans is offering free virtual cookery demos and cook-alongs.

They are willing to host a virtual activity, via an organisation's Facebook page or YouTube channel. They recently delivered some 'Facebook Lives' on their own Facebook page which you can view by clicking [here](#).

They hope that these interactive cookery activities will help to reduce isolation for older adults and will be a fun activity that older adults can look forward to... as well as perhaps learning some new cookery tips and recipes.

They can offer a diverse range of themes, from cookery demonstrations, on getting creative with store cupboard ingredients, cooking on a budget, vegan baking (especially relevant with the lack of eggs available!) bread- and pasta-making and more.

They can also deliver live 'cookalongs', or interactive group sessions with a chef on hand to simply talk through what people might cook, based on what they have left in their cupboards at this difficult time. They have been delivering these via Zoom.

They also have a virtual vegan lunch club. It runs bi-weekly via Zoom. Follow the link [here](#) for more info.



What You Can do in Your Locality / Community

Age Friendly Street Audits

What can you do to make your locality and streets more age friendly and accessible to all. Click [HERE](#) to see how you can set out with a small group of friends to carry out an age friendly audit of your local roads, streets, buildings and parks. By doing this, writing down your findings and taking photos you can have a pleasant hour or so walking the area and then send your findings to your local councillor or official to act on. It is a good way to check what the condition of your pavements are, how easy it is to cross the road, what facilities are available to you, how safe the local park is. This is senior citizen led research and can feed info into the decision makers who are reorganising our streets and communities to make sure pedestrians are safe and your local area is accessible to people of all ages and mobilities . For more details about AGE Friendly Cities and what our action plan is for London click [HERE](#)



Age Friendly Communities

The Centre for Ageing Better have published an online document that includes some very useful information on the response to Covid-19. The link includes examples and case studies of Age Friendly communities that are happening in response the the COVID crisis. The aim is to showcase those who have excelled in creating Age Friendly communities and inspire others to try to do the same in their community:



<https://www.ageing-better.org.uk/age-friendly-communities-and-covid-19>

How to Stay Safe at Home / When Going Out

Self Isolation

Public Health England, (the government body for health in the UK) have put together this document of advice for if you need to self isolate. For many this can be an extremely challenging experience, especially if there are few friends and loved ones in your immediate vicinity and the tips and advice in this guide will help you to best prepare and make use of the services that are available. [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Self-isolating protects your friends, family and community - Public health matters \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)



Winter Wise

Winter can bring extra challenges. Dark evenings and icy pavements can make it harder to get out, while cold weather can make us vulnerable to illness. Higher fuel bills can be worrying too. Independent Age's guide 'Winter wise' has practical tips on staying warm and healthy in the winter months, including information on Winter Fuel Payments, so you don't need to dread the cold weather. Coping with Winter from Independent Age [Winter wise | Independent Age](#)



Post COVID Advice Posters

If the new COVID guidance has you a bit confused then there are some helpful posters which can be downloaded. The posters, by Keep Safe help to simplify the messages coming from the government on how to abide by the rules and stay safe. They include advice on vaccinations, support bubbles, self isolation, testing food banks and domestic abuse. You can download them from the link below: <https://www.keepsafe.org.uk/posters>

keep safe

Travelling by Tube?

If you have to travel on the tube this link shows you when your tube station is busiest and best to avoid. Click the link and then change to your local train station using the drop down menu [CLICK HERE](#)



Park and Public Toilets

Those of you who can get out and about will be pleased to know that park toilets are beginning to reopen. You can check it out on London Parks website www.goparks.london

It is essential that public toilets reopen as more of us are getting out and about. The Toilet Consortium – which PAiL is a member of – is urging local authorities to reopen their toilets safely and calling on the Government to issue guidance. If your local toilets are not open, write to your local council.

Disabled Toilet Keys - RADAR and other toilet keys can be obtained for a few pounds from a number of outlets. See www.ageukincontinence.co.uk



'Just Can't Wait' Cards - This is a small card that you can use to tell shop- and café-managers discretely that you have a medical condition and need to use the toilet urgently. They are available for a small sum from a number of charities including www.bladderandbowel.org.

Street Layout

As London Boroughs are changing street layouts to cope with social distancing it's important that older people and disabled needs are taken into account. The RNIB has just started a campaign to ensure disabled people concerns are taken into account,.

<https://e-activist.com/page/61212/action/1?ea.tracking.id=8ee5e017>

R N I B

Domestic Abuse

For help in tackling domestic abuse affecting older people see the help that can be provided by Hourglass a charity helping older people. One in six older people are victims of abuse. That's over 16% of our mothers, fathers, uncles, aunties, grannies, grandads, friends and neighbours. The Hourglass mission is simple: end the harm, abuse and exploitation of older people in the UK.

<https://www.wearehourglass.org/>



Face Masks

The GLA have produced guidance on using face masks during the crisis. The Government has made it mandatory to wear a face covering on all public transport and in shops in England. If you can wear a face covering but choose not to then you may be given a fine of £200 or refused entry/service. [LINK HERE](#)



An additional report from the BBC “ Coronavirus: Mayor urges shops to stick reusable face masks”:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-52736284>

Fraud Advice

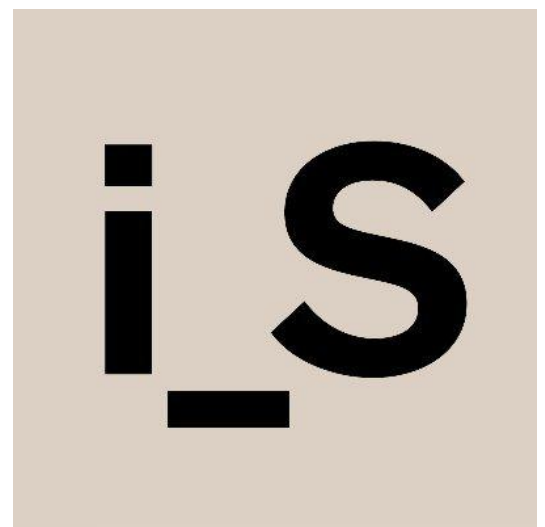
The Guardian has written an article about the need to protect the access to cash in the wake of the pandemic link [here](#). The article is based on a report from the consumer group Which? Vulnerable people are at risk of being left with no way to pay for essential products and services as the coronavirus crisis accelerates the move to a cashless society, new Which? research has found. Which? You can also help to protect yourself from fraud with the advice from Which? [Here](#)



COVID Safe Workplaces

The COVID-19 Safe Workplace Charter and briefing document on ending work lockdowns in GB. Ensuring safe workplaces for older workers advice. A safe return to the workplace is essential for the economy, the health of workers and of the wider community. It must therefore be at the core of any effective strategy to deal with COVID-19. However, such safety is endangered by the gig economy, precarity, structural inequalities low pay, lack of sick pay, zero hours contracts and a disregard for the law by some employers. COVID safety cannot be taken for granted or left to the discretion of individual enterprises. It must be guaranteed by robust principles, policies and procedures.

[COVID-Safe-document-agreed.pdf \(independentsage.org\)](#)



Useful Advice on Saving Costs on Home Heating

As winter draws in it is more important than ever that older people have access to heating at an affordable price. The consumer group Which? Have put together this guide for older people which helps you get the best deal for your heating. Click the [LINK HERE](#) to find out more.



TfL Turn Up and Go

From November 23 Transport for London resumed their Turn Up and Go service on the London Underground. This means that Underground staff can offer that extra bit of support to those who need it, for example pushing a wheelchair, offering an arm to someone visually impaired, or accompanying someone in a lift, when safe to do so. They are also able to remove their mask when at a two-metre distance, if that is needed to communicate with you clearly.

To help them do this safely, they ask that you sanitise your hands before and after contact and wear a face covering and socially distance wherever possible. They have also provided staff with disposable sleeves to wear on their arm when guiding you, giving them and you additional protection. They welcome any feedback you can provide to help us understand your needs better. There may be some circumstances where they are not able to offer physical assistance, for example, if you are unable to wear a face covering. In this case, they would offer a free taxi service to the most convenient station so you can continue your journey



Links to Good News Stories
Campaigns, Sources of Help, Things to do, Ways to Stay in Touch

Dental Practices Reopening

Some dental practices have reopened and have initiated new safety procedures for coronavirus – here's what to expect when you next visit your dentist.

<https://www.dentalhealth.org/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=c663e631-18f4-4184-beb6-801b863d3ce9>

Phone Tree

Do you want to join in a phone tree. Local age forum members in parts of London have started to ring people they know maybe isolated or lonely. You can do that with your contacts. One example around White City involved Imperial College students helping isolated older residents by matching them with a phone buddy for tech and befriending support, offering them up to two thirty-minute sessions every week via telephone or video call with a dedicated Imperial volunteer. See:

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/news/198313/science-backpacks-tech-help-elderly-supporting/>

Personal Resilience Stories

Marjorie's Story -

Marjorie lives alone in her flat in Somers Town. Despite her ongoing health conditions, she lives an active and busy life which belies her 84 years. Because of her age she is shielding during the Covid-19 lockdown which has involved a dramatic change to her life. READ MORE here: [Marjorie's Story :: Healthwatch Camden](#)

We Will Get Through -

For older people — and indeed all of us, their children, relatives and friends — this is a truly gut-wrenching time. My local pharmacist Vinay Mehta, 58, told The Standard: “It's getting desperate now. Some older people are panicking. They want supplies of medication because they will be housebound. In 30 years of running my shop, I have never known anything like it.” READ MORE here: [We will get through](#)

Discharge From Hospital

590 people's stories of leaving hospital during Covid-19: A joint report between Healthwatch England and the British Red Cross Advice [People's stories of leaving hospital during COVID-19 \(redcross.org.uk\)](https://www.redcross.org.uk/People%20s%20stories%20of%20leaving%20hospital%20during%20COVID-19)

Telephone Scams Advice

Telephone scams which have increased during this time. According to a report by Age UK, 43% of people aged 65 and over, which is almost five million people – believe they have been targeted by scammers but it is estimated only 5% of these crimes are ever reported. This report by Pauline Smith has put together some common telephone scams to look out for and top tips to help prevent Talking About My Generation readers from falling foul to fraud. [Top tips on how to avoid telephone scams - Talking About My Generation](#)

Disparities in the Risks and Outcomes of COVID-19

The Public Health England Report on disparities of COVID. This is a descriptive review of data on disparities in the risk and outcomes from COVID19. This review presents findings based on surveillance data available to PHE at the time of its publication, including through linkage to broader health data sets. It confirms that the impact of COVID-19 has replicated existing health inequalities and, in some cases, has increased them. These results improve our understanding of the pandemic and will help in formulating the future public health response to it.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/892085/disparities_review.pdf