

# The PAL Gazette

Published by Engage with Age, Charity Number 100718, Company Number NI39665.

www.engagewithage.org.uk info@engagewithage.org.uk Facebook: EngageWithAgeBelfast Twitter: @Engage\_With\_Age All information correct at the time of publication.

This edition: 3rd January 2022

## Engage with Age

### The Phone Poet

This collection of lines arrived to us by text message to welcome in 2022...

#### 'The New Year'

We are at the start of 2022,  
And not quite clear on what to do.  
Do we worry and wonder what  
changes we face  
Or just try and get on with keeping  
ourselves safe.  
Thinking positive I feel is best,  
We have survived another year and  
are blessed.  
Enjoy each day as well as we can  
And just hope that everything goes  
to plan.  
A holiday may be on our mind  
So look forward to that, but always  
be kind.  
Love thy neighbour as the good  
book says,  
And try to be helpful in different ways.  
Embrace the New Year and don't  
look back,  
Life is for living, and that is a fact.  
By Elizabeth, from Lisburn

## IN WITH THE "NEW"

January can be a great time to dust yourself off from the year that's been and look forward to new adventures. We spoke to a few of our readers about how they begin each new year. You may find some of these tips useful or interesting.

#### Getting Your House Ready

Sometimes the Christmas tree coming down is the best opportunity to bring out the Hoover and the duster and get the house spic and span. Some of you even said the start of the year was the time when your house got its best cleaning all year! But there is a split of opinion on taking down Christmas decorations.

#### Twelfth Night

The Twelfth Night tradition of taking decorations and trees down on the 12th night after Christmas day dates back to the 19th century. Twelfth Night is also the Feast of the Epiphany, when the Wise Men (or Magi) visited the baby Jesus in the manger. Tradition has it that decorations are taken down on Twelfth Night to avoid bad luck after the season of merriment. The date of Twelfth Night depends on when you start counting the days! If you start counting on Christmas Day then Twelfth Night is on the 5th January (the "eve" of the Epiphany). If you count from 26th December, then your Twelfth Night is 6th January. It is all slightly confusing! For those in the Bahá'í faith, new year is a time of celebration as the nights start to get shorter and the days get longer and brighter.

#### New King and Queen!

Another jolly Twelfth Night tradition is the Twelfth Night Party at which a mock King and Queen is chosen. At the party, a "Twelfth Night" cake is cut which has a bean and pea baked inside it. The man who ever gets a slice with a bean in it becomes King for the night, and the woman who gets a slice with a pea in it becomes Queen for the night.

Traditionally the new King and Queen sit on their "thrones" and wear paper crowns while the festivities continue. If you are celebrating with friends at Twelfth Night, make sure to stay safe, minimise your social contacts, and stop the spread of Covid!

#### A Hygge Home

This year some of you said you were keeping some of your decorations up so the house doesn't feel cold and bleak with the long nights and the dark days. Redeploying your trees fairy lights is a good way to keep your home cosy, just remember to turn them off before you go to bed! Some people also practice the Scandinavian art of "hygge". The word "hygge" comes from a Norwegian word meaning wellbeing. The idea is to be comfortable and look after yourself. This can mean making your home cosy, having fairy lights and candles around, lighting the fire and snuggling up on the sofa with a blanket. It's definitely a good way to feel secure and warm.

#### "Resolutions" or "No Resolutions"

Again, the setting of resolutions is a long standing resolution, going back to

the Babylonians over 4,000 years ago. They set resolutions at the start of their year which, for them, started in Spring when they planted their crops for the year. The most interesting resolution we heard about from our readers was someone, who will remain un-named, who is going to learn to tap dance. How wonderful! You had stories of too many resolutions to keep on top of and, it has to be said, many of the men folk don't have resolutions at all. What do you think?

#### Write it Down...

One of the best stories we heard was John, who says that at the start of each year he writes down a very short list of what he really wants to do in the forthcoming year. Just as a reminder, not to torment himself. If he gets the list done, terrific, and if he doesn't, never worry. What a good way of focusing the mind.

What will you do to get the year off to a good start? See inside for some tips on practicing self-care, and how to be good to yourself this year. We hope all of our readers have a great year to come.

### PAL Gazette News



**GET INVOLVED!** Would you like to join the team that helps put the Gazette together? You can help by writing articles, collecting recipes, searching for competitions, even helping with the mail out.

Call Lois on **07595 261253** if you would like to join the PAL Gazette team.

In the meantime, keep sending in your stories! We love your recipes, special stories, and poems.

Call Lois on **07595 261253**  
Or if you use email, send them to [info@engagewithage.org.uk](mailto:info@engagewithage.org.uk)

## Quick-fire Phone Competition!

The 12<sup>th</sup> person to call Lois on **07595 261253** will receive a £10 Tesco voucher. Competition closes 21st January 2022.

Winner announced in next edition.

**Winner of November Edition 20 was Dolly Misra.**



### COVID-19 safety



FRESH AIR



HSC Public Health Agency

WE ALL MUST DO IT TO GET THROUGH IT  
STAY SAFE. SAVE LIVES.



# Support Numbers

If you need some support, the following services can help.

## Covid-19 Community Helpline:

For information, advice and guidance, from Advice NI.

**Telephone: 0808 802 0020**

## Age-friendly Belfast:

Call to get information on key Belfast City Council services.

**Telephone: 07713 684705**

## Check-In and Chat:

A new Age NI/ Commissioner for Older People telephone service for people over 60 who may be isolated and fancy a chat.

**Telephone: 0808 808 7575**

# HERE TO HELP

To reach the Engage with Age team see numbers below.

We are always happy to receive your phone calls so our mobile numbers are:

**Eamon Quinn 07710 993036**

**Cathy Chambers 07468 695593**

**John McCandless 07729 526576**

**Sarah Gordon 07423 702721**

**Caleb Armitage 07436 174793**

**Our telephones are available during office hours and weekdays.**

If you phone and we can't answer, please leave a message and we will return your call.

## Send your letters to:

**The PAL Gazette, Engage with Age, East Belfast Network Centre, 55 Templemore Avenue, Belfast BT5 4FP.**

**Or you can email:**

**info@engagewithage.org.uk**



# Practicing Self-Care this January

Once the glitter and excitement of Christmas and the New Year festivities have passed, January can feel like a dark and dreary time. Especially in these uncertain times of covid, it is important that each of us makes the time to look after ourselves. Self-care is something that may not come naturally to all of us, but these top tips will help you nourish body, mind and soul this winter.

## Get Outdoors

The colder weather makes staying inside in the warmth and comfort of the house a very enticing prospect. But getting outside is really beneficial. Getting a daily dose of natural light boosts our vitamin D levels and can really help lift your mood. Even on a cloudy day walking to the shop, taking the dog out for a stroll or even wrapping up warm and sitting in the garden with your cuppa can make a big difference. Getting out in the fresh air helps shake off the cobwebs and beat that "cabin fever" feeling we all get when we're stuck indoors for a while. Even gentle exercise helps boost your circulation and keep you healthy. While you're out, reconnect with nature by looking for signs of spring coming – the first signs of snowdrops and crocuses popping their heads through the frosty soil always raises a smile. If you don't feel like going far from home, feed the birds in your garden and make sure they have access to fresh water. They'll be very grateful for the help during the winter cold, and will reward you with lots of antics to keep you amused.

## Feed Your Body

We all know we should be making healthy choices when eating, but let's face it, who wants to eat a salad in January? Thankfully there are plenty of ways you can satisfy the need for tasty, warming dishes at this time of year while still nourishing your body with healthy foods. Try to use fresh ingredients rather than heavily processed foods, and cook from scratch when you can. Many of our favourite comfort foods can be a

healthy choice. Hearty stews and casseroles can be packed full of seasonal vegetables. Making your own soups is a great way to get lots of healthy vitamins and minerals into your diet without compromising on flavour or the comfort factor. Simply roasting some tomatoes and peppers with garlic then whizzing in the blender with a little low-salt vegetable stock makes a delicious tomato and pepper soup. Challenge yourself to try something new once a week – maybe you could go to your local greengrocer and look for a new type of fruit to try? Keep an eye on newspapers and magazines for new recipes and meal ideas, you never know what new favourites you might discover!

## Exercise Your Mind

Keeping your mind active is just as important as exercising your body. It's so easy to fall into a routine that's "easy". Sitting in front of the TV watching a favourite film with a cuppa and a biscuit on a rainy afternoon is a favourite activity for most of us, but a break away from "screen time" isn't just good for the kids! Give the little grey cells a work out by challenging yourself to complete the daily crossword or other puzzles in your newspaper each day, or buy yourself a puzzle book. Jigsaws are a great way to pass an afternoon, or you could try

out some of the craft activities from the PAL Gazette. Picking up an old-fashioned book and taking time to read a great story is a luxurious way to spend an hour in these technology driven times. Get some fresh air and exercise by visiting your local library to find new adventures or revisit old favourites. For those of us who do like spending time online there are lots of online quizzes and games that challenge your brain and can be a lot of fun too!

## Treat Yourself

We're all guilty of putting ourselves last – looking after partners, family and friends are all a priority for most of us. However, you can't pour from an empty cup! Prioritising your own happiness and wellbeing is not a selfish act – in fact it is an essential part of self-care. Treating yourself is a great way to show yourself some of the love and care you lavish on others. Run yourself a bubble bath, take time to really relax in it and then use all those lovely lotions and potions you've been keeping "for good". Take yourself out for a luxury hot chocolate and a piece of cake at your favourite café. Go to that little shop you love and buy yourself that special something you've been admiring in the window for so long. Book that night away for you and your significant other – and make sure you pack your "good" clothes for your night out. Wear that special jewellery and splash on the expensive perfume or aftershave every day. Go on, you deserve it!



## SPECIAL THANK YOU! To Jonathan Hegan

Some of you will know that Jonathan Hegan has been on the board of Engage with Age for many years. At our AGM in November 2021 Jonathan stepped down as Chair of Engage with Age. The trustees, staff, volunteers and beneficiaries of Engage with Age would like to say a huge thank you to Jonathan for all of the time he spent working tirelessly on our behalf. Jonathan showed wonderful and selfless leadership for the charity – people like Jonathan are to be cherished and thanked. So thank you Jonathan for your great contribution and we hope we'll all continue to be in touch! From everyone at Engage with Age.



## The Street in Winter by John Galbraith

Down the street a car draws away from the kerb, it passes my window, slush splurts from its tyres until it disappears.

The bedroom curtain across the street moves slightly, a lit cigarette glows behind it. A face appears at the window, then vanishes.

A man beats his arms against the snow, he lifts his face to peer at the house numbers, then staggers up the path across the way.

Raised voices stretch along the street A door bangs of its hinges, then quiet Descends, each house seeking its own peace.



## Words Alive Exhibition - 'Your Story and Mine'

Words Alive's "Your Story and Mine" photo exhibition is currently available for public viewing in Newtownbreda Library. Please check with library directly for opening times and viewing availability.

**Tel 028 9070 1620**

From 24th January it will be available to view at Belfast City Hall.

**For more information on Words Alive outreach please contact cathy.chambers@engagewithage.org.uk 07468 695598**



# WHAT'S ON

There are so many activities available online. All free of charge, everyone welcome. Join in!

## WALKS

There will be walks in South Belfast on Tuesdays in January at 2pm and in East Belfast on Wednesdays at 2pm.

If you are interested in taking part contact Caleb Armitage for more details via phone on **07436 174793** or via email on [palproject@engagewithage.org.uk](mailto:palproject@engagewithage.org.uk)

## KIT GROUP

Every Thursday 2pm  
The Keeping In Touch Group (KIT Group)  
Dee Street Community Centre, 12-16 Dee Street, Belfast BT4 1FT.

## T'AI CHI

Every Friday 11am at Inverary Community Centre, Inverary Avenue, Belfast BT4 1RN.

## FAMILY TREE GROUP

Meeting on the 12th and 26th January in South Belfast at Ballynafeigh Community Development Association.

In all instances above, please call/ email Caleb to let us know you're coming. Call Caleb on **07436 174793** or email [palproject@engagewithage.org.uk](mailto:palproject@engagewithage.org.uk)

## SOUTH BELFAST LIFESTYLE FORUM

Meeting 11th January, 10.45am,  
Donegall Pass Community Centre.

For further information email [cathy.chambers@engagewithage.org.uk](mailto:cathy.chambers@engagewithage.org.uk)



## ONLINE EVENTS

### Chocolate Bingo

7.30pm Thursday 14th  
and 28th January 2022.

For zoom link email [eamon.quinn@engagewithage.org.uk](mailto:eamon.quinn@engagewithage.org.uk)



### Jim's Pub Quiz Without a Pub

Via Zoom, Thursday 21st January 2022

For zoom link email [eamon.quinn@engagewithage.org.uk](mailto:eamon.quinn@engagewithage.org.uk)

# The Questionnaire

**Name:** Tony Barclay

**Position:** The new Chair of the Board of Engage with Age (as of November 2021)

**How do you enjoy spending your free time?** Long walks with my ever patient wife, Emma, my guide dog Wallace and our wee rescue dog Molly. Or even longer running routes, either with Emma on her cycle or with a willing guide! Add to that reading a good book, especially crime, and epics such as James Mitchener's classics.

**Why are these activities important to you?** I am lucky to live next to the sea, yet within a short distance of hills and forests, each offering peace and quiet in a hectic world. Enjoying either with the most important person in my life, being able to share these precious moments, is truly priceless.

**What is the best thing about living here?** I was born in Dublin, raised from the age of four in England, and returned some 16 years or so ago. Best move I ever made, never regretted, was to live here. The pace of life, the wonderful folks, the beautiful country we call home - why live anywhere else?

**Favourite Pastimes?** Despite being 'of a certain age' where society thinks I should have my carpet slippers on, going for a run is still my favourite past time! I like to be as active as possible, and though sight limitations mean I do not get to see much of where I may run, my guide runner is pretty good at describing things for me - and we certainly do get around. Another favourite pastime if one could describe it as such is volunteering - as well as being chair of EWA, I am also chair of a children's centre, and a mentor for sporting groups through Sported, and a trustee of Disability Sport NI - I do like to keep very busy!

**Favourite film?** "Gandhi". This biopic of one of history's greatest men is truly inspiring. Gandhi brought about huge, national and international change through peaceful means. I have watched the movie numerous times, studied this great man, and would love to have had an opportunity to sit and talk with him.

**Favourite Food?** Anything Greek. Greek food is so healthy, incorporating vegetables and natural oils. From a feta salad to Stifado and more, anything Greek is worth sitting down for.

**Tell us something about you that not many people know?** In my twenties, I was accepted for ordination training within the Church of England. I was a very active member of a thriving parish, leader of the youth group, parish visitor, altar server and considered to be the next curate for the parish. I underwent a selection programme at Lincoln Cathedral, staying at the Bishop's Palace next to the beautiful Cathedral. Lincoln Cathedral still holds a very special place in my heart.

**What advice would you give to young people?** Believe in yourself, first and foremost. Believe in yourself, and magic will happen.



# New Activities - Classic Book Group

A new book group, meeting monthly, reading titles we are all familiar with that are also freely available online. The group meets in Café Refresh in the Skainos Centre on Newtownards Road Belfast. January's book is 'Of Mice and Men' by John Steinbeck. Everyone welcome! To join in, contact Caleb on 07436 174793 or email [palproject@engagewithage.org.uk](mailto:palproject@engagewithage.org.uk)



# Crafty Corner - Photo Holders

Nowadays so many pictures are digital and on our phones that we don't tend to display them. Print your favourite photos and put them on show in these easy to make photo holders.

**You will need:**

- Wooden spool/cotton reel
- Paperclip
- Scissors
- Fabric or felt
- Glue
- Buttons, ribbon, lace or any other small embellishments

**Instructions:**

Cut a piece of fabric or felt long enough to wrap around the middle of your cotton reel. Make sure it is wide enough to cover the reel. Glue this in place, use your ribbons, buttons and any other embellishments to decorate your reel.

Push your paper clip into the hole at the top of your reel, using a dab of glue to hold it if it is loose, then use this to hold your photo.



# Covid Response Contact Numbers

If you are in East or South Belfast and have any Covid related emergencies here are some useful numbers:

**East Belfast Covid Helpline:**  
07783 631114 (Mon-Fri 9.30am - 4.30pm)

**South Belfast Covid-19 Helpline:** 07394 569 155





# WORD SEARCH



Enter our Word Search competition for a chance to win a £10 Tesco voucher.

Find the following eight words that appear in this edition of the PAL Gazette:

- JANUARY • GAZETTE • NEW YEAR
- HEALTHY • RESOLUTION
- WALKING • FAMILY • JOKES

Phone Lois Kennedy on **07595 261 253** and tell her where the words are and you will be entered into the draw for a £10 Tesco voucher. If there is more than one correct entry the winner will be drawn at random.

The winner will be announced in the next edition of The PAL Gazette.

**Entries by 21st January 2022.**

The winner of last edition's Word Search was **Bernadette O'Hara**

## Night Blessing

Submitted by Audrey Lynas

Your words and actions matter: they can lift someone up or cast them down. May you choose kindness in your words, actions, thoughts and reactions. May the you that no one sees be the same as the you that others know. May you be shown kindness by others too.

WINTER IS COMING

Are you ready?

If you're eligible you can boost your immunity this winter by getting the flu vaccine, COVID jab or both.

**BOOST**  
YOUR IMMUNITY  
THIS WINTER

FLU vaccine  
COVID-19 jab

HSC Public Health Agency



## Can You Read This Clearly?

Can you read this paper clearly?

If you need a magnifying glass, **phone or text Eamon on 07710 993 036.**

We will send you one through the post for free.



## OLD JOKES HOME!

Submitted by our Anonymous Phone Caller who loves a joke.

Have you heard about the chocolate record player?  
It sounds pretty sweet.

Where do you learn to make a banana split? Sundae School.



## Jim's Tea Time Quiz

Answer each of these five questions correctly for your chance to win a £10 Tesco voucher.

1. In which film did Marilyn Monroe's dress blow up around her waist as she stood over a grating?
2. What was the name of Napoleon Bonapart's first Empress?
3. What river flows beneath Belfast's High Street?
4. In athletics the relay race has how many runners?
5. Which modern country was known as Siam until 1938?

The winner of last month's quiz was **Win McConaghey**. To enter, phone **Lois Kennedy on 07595 261 253** on weekdays, 10am-6pm. Please note, due to the popularity of competitions all correct entries are placed in a draw.

**Entries for this edition's quiz need to be in by 21st January 2022.**

The answers to the last quiz were:

1. Cinderella
2. Saint Stephen
3. Germany
4. Chestnuts
5. Quality Street

## Jim's Pub Quiz Without a Pub

On the third Thursday each month via Zoom

To join in email [eamon.quinn@engagewithage.org.uk](mailto:eamon.quinn@engagewithage.org.uk)



## Recipe One Pot Sausage Casserole

(serves 4)

Serve up this delicious winter warmer with some fresh crusty bread - and with only one pot to wash up you'll be done in no time!

### Ingredients

- 4 large potatoes
- 4 carrots
- 8 large sausages
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 tsp paprika
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 400ml vegetable stock
- 1-2 bay leaves

### Method

1. Turn the oven to 180°C/fan 160°C/gas 4.
2. Peel the potatoes and carefully cut them in half, then into quarters.
3. Peel the carrots and cut each carrot into about 4 or 5 even pieces.
4. Prick the sausages all over with a fork. Heat the olive oil in a heavy-based casserole and fry the sausages, turning often, until lightly golden all over. Remove the sausages from the pan and put them on a plate.
5. Add the chopped onion to the casserole (there will still be some oil in the pan from the sausages) and

continue to cook over a low heat for 5-10 minutes, until the onion is slightly soft.

- Add the garlic and paprika and cook for another minute.
- Add the chopped potatoes and carrots and stir everything around in the casserole so that the vegetables are coated with the oil.
- Add the tomatoes and stock (to measure the stock, you can use the empty tomato can - filled up, it will hold 400ml of stock) and the bay leaves. Bring to a simmer. Return the sausages to the casserole.
- Using your oven gloves, carefully put the casserole into the oven. Cook for 45 minutes, until the potatoes are cooked through, and serve.



## Domestic Covid-19 Vaccination Certificates

Domestic Covid-19 Vaccination Certificates were introduced on 29th November 2021 and became enforceable from 13th December 2021. This means that some hospitality venues will ask for proof of your vaccination status. Venues include hospitality venues that service food and drink, cinemas, theatres, concert venues, and some indoor and outdoor events.

It is possible to get a Domestic Vaccine Certificate on your mobile phone, or to get a paper certificate. For the certificate on a mobile phone visit [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk) for directions. For a paper certificate telephone **0300 200 7814** Monday to Sunday from 8am to 6pm. Please note that getting a paper certificate takes longer than the mobile phone certificate.

Engage with Age thanks its supporters and funders:



Belfast City Council

