

## WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER

We are an independent charity providing practical help so that people who need support can live safely and well in their homes and communities. (You might know us by our former name, 'Mobile Repair Service'.) We hope to bring some light into your day with our newsletter which has information, stories, tips and ideas to help you through coronavirus lockdown.

### **This week we are... Sending thanks to to all our volunteers**

During the current lockdown, our volunteers have been giving their time to support those people who need assistance with shopping and getting their medication, and we would like to acknowledge their efforts. A big thank you to all of them!



You're receiving this newsletter as you have used one of our services in the past. If you don't want to receive any future fortnightly newsletters please contact us by email on [newsletter@mrsindependentliving.org](mailto:newsletter@mrsindependentliving.org), phone 0330 380 1013 or text STOP followed by your name to 07780 311735.

# Updated Government advice...

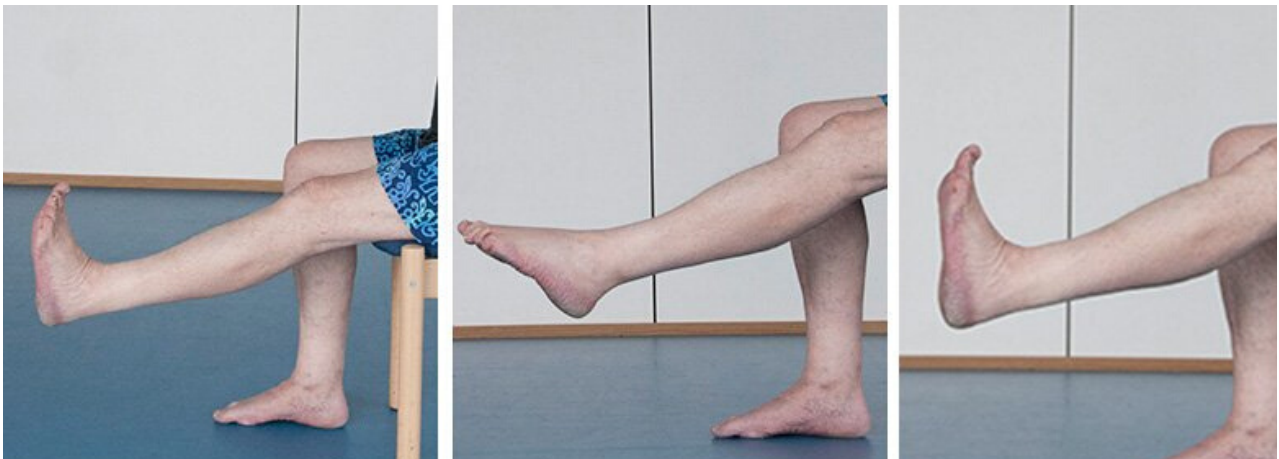
The latest Government advice is to **Stay Alert**. This means we should all still try to stay at home as much as possible, but **now you can**:

- leave the house for unlimited amounts of exercise each day.
- meet one other person from outside your household at a time, but try to stay 2 metres apart.
- sit in parks but keep 2 metres apart from others.
- go to a garden centre.

## You should still avoid:

- Using public transport where possible.
- Visiting family and friends.
- Gathering in a group of more than two people.
- Going out if you are over 70 or have an underlying health condition.

Find the latest NHS guidance here:  
[www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19)



## Exercise you can do at home

This stretch will improve ankle flexibility and lower the risk of developing a blood clot.

**A.** Sit upright, hold on to the side of the chair and straighten your left leg with your foot off the floor.

**B.** With your leg straight and raised, point your toes away from you.

**C.** Point your toes back towards you.

Try 2 sets of 5 stretches with each foot.

# Something different?

## If you can access the internet....

- You can watch LIVE elephants at water holes in South Africa, eagles nesting in Iowa, bears catching salmon in Alaska and more on [explore.org/livecams](https://explore.org/livecams)
- Take a trip down memory lane with the BBC Reminiscence Archive providing access via photographs, audio or video with a choice of past decades or themes, especially to support those with dementia. [remarc.bbcrewind.co.uk/#](https://remarc.bbcrewind.co.uk/#)
- Join the Hackney-based Anima Theatre for their Bedtime Reading Project. Sign up to receive a new bedtime story every night at 9pm as read by local contributors. Got a story to tell? You can submit your story too. Join in at [theatreanima.com](https://theatreanima.com)

## If you're not online...

- Why not make a nesting bag for the birds? 1. Fill an empty onion/orange net bag with nesting material, e.g. raffia, non-metallic ribbon, small sticks or pet hair. 2. Hang from a tree branch near a window and watch the birds begin construction.
- Always wanted to try your hand at writing? Try writing a journal of your thoughts as you do things during the day. Write freely and see where it takes you.



If you want help using your phone, tablet or laptop, or getting online, call us on 07423 162019 and arrange a time to speak with one of our staff or volunteers who might be able to help.

# Money matters

## Did you know...

- Some banks and the Post Office now offer a cash delivery service for account holders. People who are shielding/unable to leave their homes can have cash delivered to their doors. Check with your bank to find out if they offer this service.
- The Post Office has a 'Payout Now' scheme. This is a voucher service available to all banks, building societies and credit unions who can send a barcode voucher to their customers via text, email or post. If you give this voucher to a trusted person, they can pick up cash for you at a Post Office location: [www.postoffice.co.uk/post-office-payout](http://www.postoffice.co.uk/post-office-payout). Some banks offer a similar service but you will have to authorise a third-party to access your account. Contact your bank to find out if they offer this service.
- Most banks now have dedicated coronavirus helplines for people over 70 or those in isolation. Call us on 0330 380 1013 if you want to find out your bank's helpline number.

Read this article from Which magazine to find out more about the options available:

[www.which.co.uk/news/2020/05/how-banks-are-helping-vulnerable-customers-during-the-coronavirus-crisis/](http://www.which.co.uk/news/2020/05/how-banks-are-helping-vulnerable-customers-during-the-coronavirus-crisis/)



## Meet the team...

Each week we'll introduce one of our team members. This week it's Mary Helena, who joined MRS in July 2018. Nearly two years later she is still working as Administrator in adaptations work and bookkeeping. Mary has had a 40-year career working in small charities and non-profit organisations. She has volunteered with Bags of Taste for several years, and makes mosaics with the Hackney Mosaic Project. She also enjoys crochet and loves her beautiful garden.

# More money matters

## If you are over the state pension age...

You may be entitled to claim Pension Credit or Attendance Allowance. A whopping 40% of people who have a right to Pension Credit do not claim it! Attendance Allowance is also not claimed by lots of people who could get it. Here we summarise Pension Credit, and give you some pointers of things you need to know. In the next newsletter we'll have a look at Attendance Allowance.

## Pension Credit

- Pension Credit is a Government benefit that tops up your income to a minimum level if you are over state pension age.
- You could get up to £173.75 if you're single, or £265.20 if you're applying as a couple.
- If you are a couple, **both of you** must be over state pension age to make a claim for Pension Credit.
- Pension Credit can help you get other benefits. For example:
  - you may not have to pay Council Tax
  - you can get free NHS dental treatment
  - if you rent your home, you may get housing benefit
  - if you own your home, you may get help with mortgage and other costs.
  - if you care for someone, you may get extra money.
- Around 9 in 10 claims for Pension Credit are successful, so why not use your lockdown time to make a claim?
- If you need help, you can call Terry Bednall (our Advice and Community Worker) on 07833 478411.



# Local resources

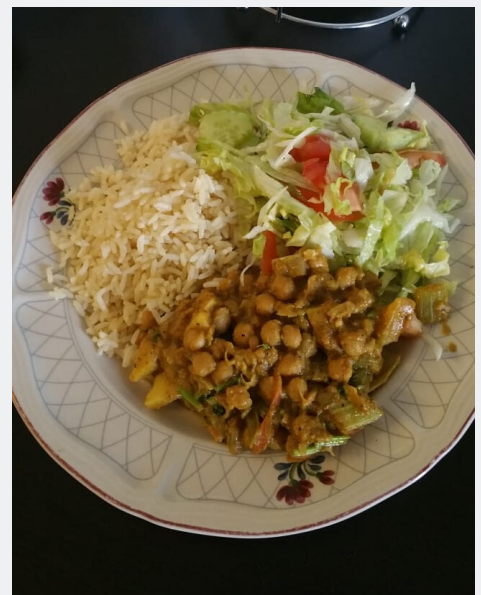
**North London Cares** is a local charity offering a phone friendships programme, online and phone-in social clubs, as well as a free monthly Postal Activity Pack which includes a different creative activity to do at home every day. #AloneTogether resources are available for anyone to download from [bit.ly/AloneTogetherActivityPackMay](https://bit.ly/AloneTogetherActivityPackMay). To sign up, phone 020 7118 3838.

## Your lockdown pictures



Thanks to Mary Sammon for sharing this picture of her knitted blanket, which has been keeping her busy during lockdown. We love the colours!

Seril Roach has been using this time to bring new nutritious flavors to his cooking. He is now cooking delicious food from around the world after signing up to **Bags of Taste**. Get ingredients for 7 meals delivered free to your home, and cook with support from their team. To register, email [hackney@bagsoftaste.org](mailto:hackney@bagsoftaste.org) or phone 07788 651042 or 07923 248586).



This newsletter was brought to you by **MRS Independent Living** for all of our users of Hackney Dudes, Staying Steady, Making Room, 50+ Digital, Side by Side and our home adaptations service.

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