

## Welcoming in 2023

It was a good end to the year for Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care as we have been able to return to near normal services, both at Greenwood Community Centre and with our outreach work in TW12.

Over the Christmas period our staff and volunteer teams worked hard to spread the festive spirit and we held our first Christmas lunch, for clients, in two years.

**You can read more about that on page 2.**

Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary care has been serving the local community since 1976 and operating Greenwood Community Centre since 1992. Recognising a current and crucial need for support, friendship and assistance for those vulnerable or isolated, there are now plans to increase outreach work and Centre services.

Two new roles are being advertised with a closing date of March 19th. These are Operations Managers, one to focus on outreach, the other to focus on the efficient running of the Community Centre. **Details at <https://greenwoodcommunity.org.uk/news-updates/>**

## Newsletter Highlights

THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY P2

COST OF LIVING CRISIS P2

STORIES FROM LOCAL PEOPLE P3, P4, P5 & P6

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS P5

THE VALUE OF VOLUNTEERING P7



# The Season to be Jolly

**Greenwood Community Centre clients were guests over the festive period both at the Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care's own event, and other local parties. A good time was had by all.**

Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care organised the centre's party which was a big success, with clients enjoying a Christmas lunch provided by Surplus to Supper.

Nick, one of the centre's volunteers entertained with guitar classics and a bit of a sing along in the beautifully decorated hall, everyone enjoyed a quiz and a name the reindeer competition and who should make an appearance but Father Christmas (looking incredibly like Michael the mini bus driver). He must, however, have parked his sleigh nearby as his sack of presents was emptied as he handed them out at the party's end, and said he Ho-Ho-Hoped everyone would have a very happy Christmas.

When Lady Eleanor Holles School held their Christmas Party for clients of local care homes and voluntary centres, it came after two years of covid-related cancellations. So popular was the event that it took six minibuses to ferry some 80 clients to the school's party. The pupils sang carols for their guests who were treated to lunch and they enjoyed playing bingo. Each person was given a Christmas gift and everyone left smiling after a very enjoyable time.

We were also grateful to have had an invitation to take some of our clients to the Twickenham Stadium for the Community Christmas Lunch. They welcomed over 200 local residents to a full Christmas Lunch at the stadium with the fantastic London Rock Choir. It was great to restart this new tradition again after the pandemic.



## Cost of Living Crisis

We are all starting to feel the impact of increases in the cost of living. Sometimes it is difficult to know who to turn to or what to do first. The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames has created a "Cost of Living Hub" on their web site that is full of useful information for those seeking help and support. This can be seen at:

**[https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/cost\\_of\\_living\\_hub](https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/cost_of_living_hub)**

The web site includes information on help with household bills, grants and benefits, support and advice services, food supplies, family and childcare support, health and care costs and local warm spaces you can visit. If you don't have access to the internet you can always pop by Greenwood Community Centre and borrow one of our devices to check out the information, or a member of staff can help source the information you may need.

# Off the Record

Off the Record Twickenham is a registered charity which provides the only drop-in counselling, information and sexual health service for young people aged 11–24 who live, work or study in the Borough of Richmond Upon Thames.

Not only do they provide help where most needed but also where it's accessible, including counselling services at Greenwood Community Centre on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

More than 1,500 young people are helped by the Off the Record team each year, positively impacting their emotional and mental wellbeing when they are experiencing unprecedented levels of stress and anxiety. The vision is for every young person in the borough to possess the skills and confidence to overcome life's challenges.

Deborah Kerpner, their manager, explains: *"It is very beneficial to be able to offer counselling at the Centre as it makes support more accessible to those in the area. Our borough's hospital admissions for self-harm in young people is the fourth highest for a London borough and demand for our counselling services for mental health support is constantly increasing. The Hampton Hill facility is a very safe and private space and allows us to offer help more widely."*

**Counselling at Greenwood or the Twickenham centre is by appointment. For further information please contact 020 8744 1644, via email [counselling@otrtwickenham.com](mailto:counselling@otrtwickenham.com) or text 07414 763293**

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## Giving back and enjoying it

*If you want a job doing - give it to a busy person, or so the saying goes.*

That's certainly the case with Ernie Hoare who, with his wife Pam, has lived in Hampton Hill for the past 40 years and, at 78 years young, is still giving back to his community.

Pam enjoys chair yoga and meditation run by Sarah Greenall at Greenwood Community Centre each Tuesday, and she suggested action man husband Ernie might like to volunteer at the Centre. After a year of getting more involved he's really enjoying it.

*"I walked round to meet my wife one day, talked to Pauline and Jackie in the office and was soon filling in the form. Now I'm in the office allocating driver journeys on Monday mornings and driving people to hospital or dentist appointments, to visit nursing homes, whatever they need,"* says Ernie.

*"It's interesting talking to people and finding we have things in common. One lady had been a teacher at my son's old school Rectory, now Hampton High."*



A busy working life saw Ernie with the Prudential Assurance Company for 33 years before joining the Metropolitan Police in 1995 and working in counter terrorism at Heathrow Airport for 26 years. In 2020 he went down to working three days a week but after working from home in lockdown decided to “*pack it in.*”

*It was tedious working on my own in a bedroom,”* he explains.

Having retired finally in December 2021, he is still an Amateur Swimming Association official affiliated to Teddington Swimming Club, where his sons used to swim and Pam was secretary, and officiates at local and Middlesex championship events.

He was also a school governor for 32 years at Carlisle, Hampton Hill and Rectory. “I keep thinking I should get involved at school level again, maybe helping youngsters with their reading,” he says.



Ernie on volunteer driver duties.

His two sons, Stephen and Philip, both married to Frauke and Sophie respectively, are now in their forties, one living in Cranleigh and the other in Weybridge and Philip’s eight year old son, Ted,

*“They are not far away and it’s great to have family and young Ted. Some of those I drive live alone without family close by, so they enjoy a chat when I drive them and so do I. People are interesting and it’s a small world.”*

*“I think I might be becoming part of the furniture at the community centre, but I really enjoy being involved and would recommend volunteering there, particularly if you have retired or have time to spare. I hope I sometimes make people smile and I guess I must be doing something right as some people phone up and ask for Ernie to drive them. That’s great!”*

**Scan the QR code to join our mailing lists to receive either The Greenwood Post, Greenwood Activities Programme and Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care Excursion Programme**



## Heading for 100

Irene, who is 99, moved to the centre of Hampton Hill from Strawberry Hill with her husband Robert a decade ago. They were both World War II veterans, having met and married while serving in the Royal Air Force.

Less than a year after they relocated, Robert died. This left Irene depending on volunteer support, especially for being ferried to appointments.







Irene with her son.

Of her two sons, Adrian who lived in Teddington had died and his brother Paul made a life in Canada years ago. Paul visits Irene at least twice a year and most recently was staying for a couple of weeks bringing news of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

*"I am so looking forward to his visit," she says, picking up family photos of Paul and his lovely family. "Living on my own and without family nearby, I feel very lucky to have the Greenwood Community Centre support. The people there are wonderful. They are so helpful," she says.*

*"If you ring them up, they want to know what they can do to help. One thing that might seem small but is a major thing in my life is that they always give me lifts to medical appointment. They have never let me down, even when appointments are changed at the last minute, they always manage to drive me. I have two special drivers, who are so kind, Bernadette and Ernie."*

Irene used to work as a PA at a college of further education, while Robert had his own business. She also volunteered herself for many years.

*"I volunteered most of my life," she says. "For more than 20 years I helped refugees learn English. Then both Robert and I volunteered at the Hampton Hill Theatre. For 12 years I did whatever was needed, sold ice creams, programmes, helped backstage or with the props."*

Irene looks far younger than her 99 years and says *"I try to get out up the High Street most days. I have a very good carer for an hour six days a week, Sundays are my dress down days!"*

As for her youthful appearance and good health, Irene says: *"I suppose I'm just lucky, but I also feel very lucky to have the Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care who are always ready to help."*

## Random Acts of Kindness

The official Random Acts of Kindness day is 17th February but for Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care kindness is one of their values, so one of their random acts of kindness take place each month when a bouquet of flowers is delivered to someone, totally randomly, living locally to Greenwood Community Centre.

The last person to get a bunch of flowers posted this on Nextdoor:

*"Wow, there really are neighbourhood angels out there! I came home to find these beautiful flowers from Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care! I am delighted and so touched, you've really made my day! I can only say a heartfelt thank you for your thoughtfulness and I am sending all my best wishes back your way!"*

*It's nice when you see such kindness, it totally restores your faith that there are some wonderful human beings out there!! Thank you "*

Fenton Yard Flowers make sure that the bouquets spread kindness each month and Jess Sargent, owner and florist, also spreads happiness by leaving flower fairy bouquets in local spots for people to take home and enjoy.

Their bouquets are also available on subscription or a one-off delivery to Hampton, Hampton Hill, Teddington, Twickenham, Richmond and Kingston each Thursday to Saturday. **Please visit <https://fentonyardflowers.co.uk> or contact E: [jess@fentonyardflowers.co.uk](mailto:jess@fentonyardflowers.co.uk) or T: 07824777511.**



# From volunteer to client

**Roy Clements has lived in Hampton with his wife Marie for 45 years.**

**Like Ernie Hoare, a current volunteer, he became involved in helping out in his community when he retired from his job as a management consultant which saw him working in London every day.**

*"Once I retired, I met and became friends with more people in the area and was persuaded to become a volunteer," he says. "That was before the Greenwood Community Centre when a service operated out of the church hall in Hampton Hill High Street, opposite the Bushy Park gates."*

*"I began by providing a taxi service for people who needed it and was then persuaded to join the organising committee. In those days what was on offer wasn't as wide-ranging as it is now. With a centre able to offer services and classes on site, it has certainly expanded."*

Having helped out, Roy and his wife Marie, now get help themselves. Marie is 90 and Roy 89 and they are not as mobile as they once were and no longer drive.

Marie is a retired violinist, who trained at the Royal Academy of Music, and performed chamber music as well as teaching violin and piano, initially at Lady Eleanor Holles School and then from home, allowing her the flexibility to perform.

*"The Greenwood Community Centre help us so much," she says. "A lovely Scottish lady, Jane Maxwell, picks up any shopping we need and she, or one of her colleagues, drive me to appointments at Kingston Hospital. They phone us and send us Christmas presents and Easter eggs."*

*"They make a real difference to our lives and it's good to know they are there when we need them."*

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## Everyone Needs Friends

The Befriending Service run by the Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care makes a big difference to clients.

This is tailored to individual needs and sees some regularly visited at home, while others receive telephone calls from volunteers.

With an increasing number of clients with some degree of memory loss being referred to the centre, the hope now is to form a small team of specialist befrienders to support clients with early stages of memory loss and dementia.

This role will require some willingness to learn or understand the impact of memory loss on people and the best way to befriend them.

If you feel you would like to befriend people in the community who benefit from regular contact, or if you would like to help develop this new service for those with memory loss, please contact **Pauline on 020 8979 9662 or email [enquiries@greenwoodcommunity.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@greenwoodcommunity.org.uk)**





# 7 Reasons to Register with Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care

1. You can use our various **community transport** services.
2. **We can assist people doing their weekly grocery shop.**
3. Our **befriending** volunteers can offer company and social contact.
4. **Clients can access our low cost, weekly excursion programme.**
5. You are able to join in with our **social programme** at Greenwood Community Centre including our Men's Club, Women's Club and social gatherings/events.
6. **Our friendly team of staff and volunteers are at hand to offer support and ensure you are signposted to services that may be of help.**
7. All our **volunteers go through a screening process**, including the Disclosure and Barring Service, and are always carefully matched to the clients they support.

## 2 Reasons to Encourage Others to Register

1. Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care does not spend money on a large advertising and publicity budget, so helping to spread the word is essential for us to ensure we help as many people as we can.
2. **We want to spread the support and kindness we offer, by our wonderful team of staff and volunteers, throughout the local community.**



**Singing for the Brain**, with Carl Speck, brings people affected by dementia together to sing a variety of songs they know and love, in a fun and friendly environment. Join us on the second and fourth Friday of every month

## Soulful Touch

Young children have increasingly busy lifestyles and, having faced the challenges and isolation of the pandemic, can often feel overwhelmed.

That's why Tina Parmar's Soulful Touch children's yoga classes at Greenwood Community Centre provide a way to slow the world down and help youngsters' physical and mental wellbeing. Tina teaches five to 14 year olds a variety of positive life skills alongside yoga.



*"We focus on stretching, breathing techniques, the exercise working together with mindfulness, meditation and relaxation," she says. "Lots of children are busy all the time and our sessions provide an opportunity to sit quietly, relax and deal with the stress of their everyday lives. Sometimes they are so exhausted they fall asleep! The breathing techniques are calming, and one pupil has found them excellent for controlling her asthma."*



*"With the younger class we combine the yoga with stories, maybe involving jungle animals. It's lots of fun and they really get into it, get very involved."*

Tina used to be a childcare assessor but after having her children Amari, now six, and Reiss, aged three, decided to train in children's yoga and baby massage.

*"When I became a mum, I went to different classes. I love yoga and after doing pregnancy yoga I realised what a lovely way it was for mums to connect and get reassurance from each other. I decided to study kids' yoga, started teaching disability yoga and teens in school. I also teach in a nursery."*

*"In Teddington I have full classes teaching parents baby massage. I provide the oils and all the classes include post-natal yoga for the mums. Everyone benefits from yoga and mindfulness, from babies, to younger children, teens to adults."*

*"At the moment children's yoga at the Greenwood Community Centre is on Mondays from 3:45 to 4:45 for eight to 14 year olds and Thursdays for the five to eight year olds."*

It's a great way for youngsters to find a calm space and the skills to deal with the demands of modern life.

**For more information <https://greenwoodcommunity.org.uk/activities-events>**

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**If you have any ideas for content in the next newsletter you can contact the editor Patricia Mowbray via email: [enquiries@greenwoodcommunity.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@greenwoodcommunity.org.uk)**

## Supporting a local charity

Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care would find it difficult to provide all their services and run Greenwood Community Centre without regular donations from the local community. These donations are very much appreciated and go towards the great services supporting local people week in week out.

If you or your business or organisation are considering a local charity to support, or if you are taking on a challenge for charity, do please consider Hampton & Hampton Hill Voluntary Care. For more information or to make a donation, see [www.greenwoodcommunity.org.uk](http://www.greenwoodcommunity.org.uk)

