

July 2022

Estate regeneration? Older people taking the lead



KOVE's acting chair and Webheath TRA Secretary, Lynda Stuart, brings their garden story up to date

I had earmarked a derelict space on the estate as long ago as 2016. KOVE had helped us bring Camden to account and we were able to reform our tenants and residents association (TRA). Next year we tackled what the estate manager had shrugged off as "impossible-to-move-historic-contractor's-rubble".

Veolia provided £500 which we match-funded. Quotes were obtained to infill a slope and fit sleepers & trellis. The Community Investment Levy (CIL) funded grounds maintenance work & supplied planters. The late Pran Handa, a KOVE supporter, donated a bench. A neighbour helped fix and install it. Global Street Art painted a mural which brightens a

The age-friendly Kilburn news sheet

www.kove.org.uk

neglected wall under the ramp. Fortnightly coffee & cakes moved in and overwintered trees were planted. Mystery contributions appeared - pictures, ornaments, compost & plants. Then came COVID. The official opening had to be postponed. Until now!

Thursday, April 7th, was a dry day. Bunting, balloons and posters brightened the area but the cold wind destroyed an awning and prevented use of shades. There was a great turn-out. Sheltered block resident Maureen Fogarty cut the red ribbon alongside her daughter. Bring & Buy brought in £33.10. There were homemade cakes & biscuits, drinks and savouries, loads of conversation, and live singers from the nearby ICMP college.

No celebrities but everyone pitched in. There were representatives from Veolia, Camden, KOVE and fellow TRA officers from our Hampstead District Management Committee (DMC). Local Community Champion, JL, launched the music with 'an English Country garden' and collected sales donations. 30 people attended, old friends and new - not forgetting guide-dog Ava, buddy Henry and a couple of young lads who gave a hand and took some seeds to plant elsewhere! Thanks to the Webheath TRA committee, my neighbours - and a very willing friend!

INSIDE: Working towards a more age-friendly Kilburn. KOVE activities. Bus crisis. Highway Code. And Singing!

Trying to make it a better world

John Miles says that two new books Black Teacher (Beryl Gilroy, 1976 – just republished) and How to Live with Each Other (Farhan Samanani, 2022) help us think about life in Kilburn - then and now.

When Beryl Gilroy became its head in 1969 Beckford Primary School served children from twenty nationalities. As a Black woman, who had attended a multi-racial school in British Guiana, Gilroy at last felt at home. The burden of being the only Black teacher, subject to the contempt, ignorance and incomprehension of parents and staff in the London of the late 1950s, was finally lifted. When she retired in 1982, there were forty nationalities - West Hampstead and Kilburn were already diverse neighbourhoods. By the time the anthropologist Farhan Samanani arrived in 2016, Kilburn was experiencing what he refers to as 'superdiversity':

Older Jewish, Irish and Caribbean migrants rub alongside more recent arrivals from Africa, the EU and South America, bringing with them different histories, faiths, languages, understandings and hopes. Kilburn is not simply a place where the white British population is in a minority. It is one where no single group dominates and where our very language for describing difference seems to fray at the seams.

Farhan describes how some people try to build bridges, asserting themselves while listening to others. He explains how deep-rooted cultural difference is, how much work is involved in understanding how it makes us see other people, often wrongly. He shows how activists and community figures make trusted connections with people with whom they disagree or from whom they differ profoundly. Some of his people feel defeated and although Farhan proposes a hopeful politics of 'civic republicanism' – where all voices can be heard – he never suggests this can compensate for the shrinking and decline of public services. The punitive interventions by the police which sour the lives of young men are one example. The state of Kilburn High Road is another. KOVE is described as 'one of the most influential and mischievous organisations in Kilburn'. Some accolade! There is much to learn from this book and it should be widely read.

So acute was the racism Beryl Gilroy faced in the 1950s that it took years for her to become a teacher despite her qualifications and visionary approach. Some readers will object to the language but her book is vivid and funny with extraordinary portraits of the children. There's the white boy who kicks her but whose mother tells her he thinks the world of Beryl. There's the Nigerian boy, a terrible bully, whose father demonstrates the kind of corporal punishment he expects from the school to Gilroy in her office. There are the Greek and Italian boys who dominate at

home and for whom it is humiliating to directed by women at school. When Beryl arrived at Beckford she decided the chaos she found there was not 'freedom' but 'licence'. Her response was not to introduce uniforms or insist on silence but to make three changes. The daily assembly would become an infants' forum. She would join the children 'at play in the playground' and open her office to the children 'where they could discuss anything with me'. And she encouraged teaching through 'group dynamics' where all 'contributed to a common topic or project.' And she always connected school and home. Her approach prefigures Farhan's civic republicanism and she resembles his activists and fixers in other ways. She took a break from teaching when her children were born. Needing to make some money, she set up a tutoring project for children who needed help with reading. They were often in conflict with their parents and knew every trick to disguise their illiteracy. But eventually they would respond to her activity programmes, performance games and use of art and crafts, and find their way to reading. She even ran a group to help the parents understand their role.

Beryl and Farhan are or were both idealists: we know that neither a good school nor a good community can put our crisis-ridden country right. But they might be steps along the way. KOVE's concern must be with the contribution older people can make.

*We're not sure if Camden Intergenerational Week will go ahead this year. But we'll hold **our first Death Café** in October. Ellen Bernstein tells us what to expect:*

When I tell people I lead and facilitate death cafés their reactions range from horror and incredulity to curiosity and enthusiasm. They were started by Jon Underwood in 2011 to provide a safe space in which to discuss death over tea and cake.

People do feel confident in voicing their views, or simply in listening to others, in the knowledge that what is shared remains confidential. People of all ages attend death cafés - some participants just attend once; others become "groupies".

What a death café is not

Death cafés do not offer bereavement support or counselling, although they may signpost attendees to appropriate services.

I feel they are extremely valuable. Despite Covid, death remains a taboo topic. As there is no agenda at a death café wide ranging discussions encompass people sharing their experience of others' deaths and how this influences how they would like their own to be; feelings about burial versus cremation, funeral planning and mourning rituals; and bucket lists.

Having facilitated and led death cafés at the Almeida theatre, the Wellcome Collection and on Zoom, I can safely report that every café is different. Pre-Covid there was often lots of laughter. Inevitably, grief and anxiety have increased during the pandemic.

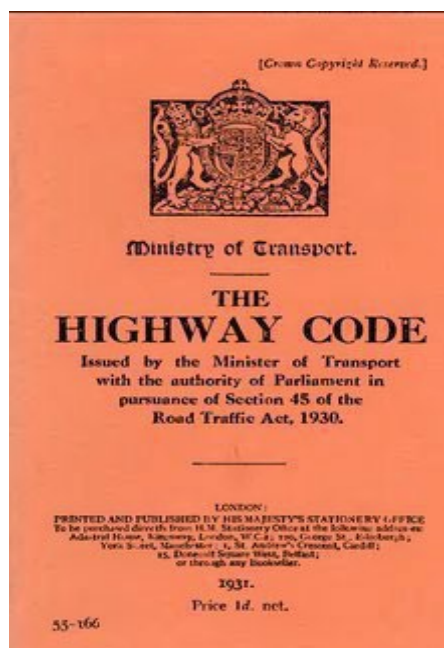
Attending a death café can give people the confidence to discuss their wishes with their loved ones and encourage people to put their affairs in order - by making a will, setting up Lasting Powers of Attorney, creating an Advance Care Plan, or arranging their funeral. **More info:** <https://deathcafe.com/>

*The **KOVE Death Café** will take place with Ellen in the week of October 17th 2022. There's no need to book. It's open to people of all ages! You can just turn up.*

Cracking the Code

Mel Wright explains the changes to the Highway Code

The Highway Code was first published in 14th April 1931. It was aimed at motorists, motor cyclists, cyclists and pedestrians and it set out our legal responsibilities on the roads. You may have heard it's just been updated and that new rules have applied since 29th January 2022. There is a new hierarchy for road users which gives a new priority to pedestrians.



The original 1931 version

We're pleased that in October 2020 KOVE contributed to the Department of Transport's consultation. We submitted comments and suggestions, in association with Living Streets, the charity which promotes everyday walking. These changes come at a good time as we launch our Age Friendly Kilburn initiative on the back of KOVE@20 anniversary publication.

Here are the big changes. The Code

- introduces a **hierarchy of road users** to ensure those who can do the greatest harm have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger or threat they may pose to others
- clarifies existing rules on pedestrian priority on pavements and that **drivers and riders should give way to pedestrians** crossing or waiting to cross the road
- **establishes guidance on safe passing distances and speeds** when overtaking cyclists or horse riders, and ensures they have priority at junctions when travelling straight ahead

WHICH magazine has published information about the revised Highway Code and how it may affect you:

"Drivers of large passenger vehicles and HGVs now have 'the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger posed to other road users'. Drivers at a junction should give way to pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross a road that they're turning into. Drivers should give way to pedestrians waiting to cross a zebra crossing, and pedestrians and cyclists waiting to cross a parallel crossing. Cyclists should give way to pedestrians that are using shared-use cycle tracks. Drivers should not cut across cyclists going ahead when turning into or out of a junction or changing direction or lane. New 'Dutch Reach' technique tells road users (drivers) how to open the door of their vehicle while looking over their shoulder Read more of the WHICH report: <https://www.which.co.uk/news/2022/01/new-2022-highway-code-changes-are-you-aware-of-the-new-rules/>

But will the Code work for us?

Kilburn High Road is still recognised by Camden and Brent as a top road safety hazard zone. We'll be out there to see how the new Code will work and what improvement it can bring.

Let's find out!

How will the Code affect our lives? Will vehicles stop for pedestrians at road junctions? Will pedestrians feel confident to assert new rights of way?

If you are a pedestrian you need to use your personal judgement and not place yourself in any danger. If you're a driver or a cyclist you need to take more care and in new ways. So far there's been a lack of public education. We're going to set up a forum so people can work together and try to use the changes to the Code. We need you to report on your experiences and keep notes if you can. We'll need to hear your views.



2018: the late great Margaret Gibbs takes her life in her hands! There's still a long way to go to make crossing Kilburn High Road a more age-friendly business.

Slow benches – safer road?

A few years ago we applied for funds from Brent to install new benches on Kilburn High Road. They awarded us enough for three but rising costs mean only two can be installed. It's taken a lot of work to get the decisions made but the officer in charge has been helpful. One should appear soon at Coventry Close, the other at Sainsbury's near the tube.

Social prescribing

A fancy phrase for knowing about useful support and telling people about it! The term is used by GPs to respond to loneliness, housing, benefits problems, mild depression or anxiety. Every surgery now has a Social Prescriber to help people to work out what might help signpost to groups and practical support and provide motivation and encouragement. Any GP Practice staff should be able to put you in touch with their social prescriber. We're encouraging local prescribers to refer people to our monthly local walks where we'll provide support.

The KOVE toilet survey

Having public toilets makes it possible for so many people to go out and continue doing the things we like. And loos need to be reliably open, welcoming, visible, clean and well maintained. So KOVE is doing a survey of loos in Kilburn to understand the situation and lobby for improvements. To let us know your experience or get involved in our Toilet Survey contact Michael Stuart, on 0781 3574699 or michael.stuart6@gmail.com.

KOVE wants to see good facilities on the High Road, at Hampstead Cemetery and in Kilburn Grange Park. We'll be outside McDonalds at 11am on **World Toilet Day, November 19th**.

Walk This Way!

Deborah Knight, KOVE's activity support worker, introduces our walking programme

In 2015 the British Medical Journal published a report: *Is there evidence that walking groups have health benefits?* The findings were positive: they have wide-ranging health benefits, including reducing blood pressure, body fat, cholesterol and risk of depression. Furthermore, walking groups 'could be a promising intervention as an adjunct to other healthcare or as a proactive health-promoting activity' with 'virtually no adverse effects.' In other words: *all good!*

The benefits are even greater for older people, helping to improve and maintain stamina, balance, muscle tone and overall wellbeing. Walking isn't strenuous; the pace and distances set should suit the group. Walking with others can also give a sense of security. Some older people lose confidence about going out alone, but being in company, talking and making new friends breaks down social isolation and aids self-confidence. As Maureen notes,

'The social aspect is important – it's what keeps one young!' Julia echoes that: *'I like the social aspect of walking with others in my age group and looking forward to a cuppa together at a cafe at the end.'*

KOVE has been organising walks for many years. They have grown in size and scope, from local ones to further afield around Camden and occasional trips to places like

Kew Gardens. Our walks are valued by members – and they are free!

Jane says, *'When I turn the corner, exit the tube, it's a real joy to meet a group of cheery familiar faces. It may be trite to say this but I never fail to be amazed at how every outing delivers so many interesting, fascinating encounters and places.'*

Maureen agrees: *'You find so many unusual and unknown, to me, places to visit in the local area and beyond.'*

Julia sums it up: *'The leader plans the route and gives a talk about the history of the area. I feel mentally stimulated when I learn new facts about a public garden, house or residential street and when I get home, I find myself searching the internet for more details and photographs. KOVE's walks have enriched my retirement and I have gained new knowledge about the city I live in. My mental and physical wellbeing has much improved since I joined KOVE.'*

If you want to join us for a walk, contact Deborah at deborah@kove.org.uk or phone Lynda on 0777 326 7505.

Special thanks for help with this article to Jane, Julia, Maureen and Suzanne (below)



Neighbourhood Forums are established for the specific purpose of developing a neighbourhood plan. Once adopted this forms part of the planning decision process alongside the local authority local plans. You can learn more here: <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/create-neighbourhood-plan-step-by-step-roadmap-guide/>. As part of the process of developing a neighbourhood plan the local group defines its own area. In Kilburn it is based on the two Kilburn wards in Brent and Camden with the inclusion of the frontage of all Kilburn High Road and the exclusion of the regeneration area in South Kilburn (Brent).

The main focus of the plan has been on Kilburn High Road; both because of its significance to the area and local communities and because it forms the boundary between Brent and Camden causing problems with communication. After eight years the Forum committee, with the support of a planning consultant now has a draft report prepared for further consultation. This has focused very largely on development and conservation on the High Road. We look forward to being able to share the draft proposals in the near future.

We were delighted Mary Arnold, a Brent resident with KNPF, came to our Open Steering Group on May 12th.

The KNPF website is <https://kilburnforum.london/> and their Twitter feed <https://twitter.com/ourkilburnnpf>

Off the buses?

Later in this newssheet KOVE trustee Frances Eley takes a phlegmatic view of the current crisis. But we have to wonder what life is going to be like for the next few years. London councils now face a budget shortfall of £400 million. Will there be any money to pay for our vital 'Municipal Services'?

Transport for London has been told to cut bus routes to qualify for further government

support. Kilburn is being particularly hard hit by their proposals. The 16 and 31 are to be axed altogether and the 189 will veer off from Belsize Road to Camden Town. The older we get the more bus transport matters. These proposals will make our lives more difficult with greatly reduced service and an unwelcome need to keep getting on and off. Let us know how this will affect you. You can tell TfL what you think until 23.59 on the 12th July 2022 at this website here: <https://haveyoursay.tfl.gov.uk/busreview>

Age-friendly? - open for discussion again

Twenty-five people – including Councillor Eddie Hanson - came together to talk about a more age-friendly Kilburn on May 12th. Thanks to Bee Sherrif, warden at Sycamore Court for accommodating us again.

Winding up his presentation our keynote speaker, Farhan Samanani, spoke of the importance of 'everyday wisdom'. KOVE, he said, is not just about the state of the built environment it's about 'strengthening the social infrastructure'.



The World Health Organisation model has eight age-friendly principles. John Miles explains what happened when we are asked to choose our top three.

I asked everyone to choose their three priorities. Twenty-four of us took part and filled in a simple questionnaire. Overall, we had an age-range of under 50 to 95, with fifteen of us over 75. That means we weren't representative of the local population. But it also means we *were* representative of the age-group most affected by impairments and exclusion on the grounds of age.

The eight WHO principles are grouped as Social Environment, Physical Environment and Municipal Services. We all agreed it wasn't an easy task – 'they're all important' was the cry. But in the end what came out was very striking. The meeting rated 'Community support and health services' as far and away the most important – 39 points in my scoring system. 'Social participation' (23) came next. Then there was a close grouping for 'Respect and Social Inclusion', 'Housing' and 'Communication and Information'. The two outdoor principles - 'Outdoor spaces and buildings' and 'Transportation' – followed. Last, and very obviously least (only four of us identified it, and all of us rating it third) was 'Civic participation', gathering only 4 points.

There's an irony in that civic participation was the reason we were meeting in the first place! Not everyone knew each other but perhaps what we were doing was more like 'social participation with a serious edge.' And we were certainly in no doubt of the importance of 'community' 'support' and 'health'. There were only two points where age seemed to play an obvious part. The eldest of us (people over 75) rated 'Respect and social inclusion' and 'Transportation' more highly than the younger group – those under 75. Do we become more aware of the impact of prejudice and exclusion as we get deeper into old age? And do we feel more keenly the practical problems of getting out and about? Some things for KOVE to think hard about.

What future for KCC?

Kilburn & West Hampstead Pensioners Action Association has written to our local councillors. Dear Councillor,

I am writing to ask what plans Camden Council has to re-open Kingsgate Community Centre. It has been closed as a community centre since 2020, when the Community Association running it hit financial problems and has since been liquidated.

At the time, the Council said that it would remain in use for the community. Before the centre closed, it was an important focal point for a wide range of activities for local people. The Kilburn & West Hampstead Pensioners met there, as did a local unemployed workers group and a Somali group. We know that some of our members attended art classes there, and others did line dancing. For older people, these activities are an important factor in reducing social isolation.

The large hall was an important facility for local groups to hold larger meetings, concerts and similar activities. The only comparable facility in the area is a hall run a private social club which charges £50 an hour to use it. We are not criticising them, but that prices out a lot of smaller charities and community groups.

The café was also a valuable meeting point for local people, as well as providing employment.

We believe that the way forward would be to hold an initial meeting of local groups who are interested in bringing the centre back into use. The support of the Council in this, and in setting up a steering group would be very important. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes **Peter Lush**, Chair, KWHPA

The Kilburn & West Hampstead Pensioners Action Association meets third Thursday of the month (except August) at 1.30pm at Sycamore Community Hall, 27a West End Lane, NW6 4NY (The Kilburn High Road end of West End Lane). We campaign on issues that affect older people and are affiliated to the National Pensioners Convention. We meet on a wide variety of topics and new people always welcome. Email peter56nw@outlook.com or phone Peter Lush on 07973 845285

Age-friendly Kilburn project officer, Michael Stuart introduces himself

I started working for KOVE this spring a few hours a week. I'm visiting local community projects, churches and care homes to re-introduce KOVE after the long Covid interruption. I've lived in Kilburn for 38 years and know many local groups already: through gardening at Kilburn tube station, harvesting apples from back gardens, working to reduce loneliness in Brent. That makes my job easier!

I'm looking for joint projects we might do with others, for example the Kiln and Latin American Centre are both interested in holding joint events. That could mean linking up with recent migrants who know few local people or with the young who have little contact with older people so all sides can make new connections and experiences.

One re-connection has been with residents in a sheltered housing block, Vivian Court, which has 170 residents. Their only communal activity is a Zumba class which 3 people were attended. We knocked on every door for a quick, informal chat and the class now has a healthier seven members. It's a good start!

I also want to boost local campaigning. I hope to come across people who want to have their voice heard: road-crossing times and loos, health and care or the environment. With a louder voice we can lobby for change to make our area better for all. If you'd like to find out more or are interested, contact me on 0781 357 4699 or michael.stuart6@gmail.com.

Fancy a bit more 'civic participation'? Our next **Open Steering Group** is at Sycamore Court Community Hall on **Thursday July 14th 2022 at 1.30pm**. Phone Michael (above) or Lynda and join us.

Singing – with joyous heart

KOVE trustee Phyllis Young has been singing in choirs since she was in infant school. She's done everything from part-songs to mass choirs. Now in her nineties she still sings with the London Pro Arte Choir and Rosslyn Hill Chapel choirs. Two great highlights have been to sing The Dream of Gerontius alongside Kathleen Ferrier shortly before she died in 1953 and to join Karl Jenkins in New York when he conducted The Armed Man on the tenth anniversary of the Twin Towers. Phyllis tells us about her life as a singer.



Phyllis Young – second from left, middle row – in 1950 with the Coleridge-Taylor Singers in 1950. Composer and conductor Avril Coleridge-Taylor is at the right of the front row.

When I went to senior school we had a new teacher who decided she would teach theory. She started off with the notes of the scale, doh-re-mi, how to jump to doh-mi-so-doh. At the end of term she gave us a test. I came top, to my amazement - 96 marks! And from that she recruited a choir. We all had to sing a song. I sang Handel's 'Where'er you Walk' from his opera Semele. And she jumped up from the piano and off the stage. I thought she was going to hit me - but it was to congratulate me. 'You're full of surprises!' she says.

I think popular music was better than

- Irving Berlin and George Gershwin – and I used to sing that as well as the classics. I started to go round music shops where they had second-hand scores and pick stuff up. I was a reasonably confident sight-reader. I had piano lessons for a while. When I left school around 1947 I thought 'OK - find a choir'. I found Westminster Choral Society with the accompanist George Thalben-Ball who was on the radio a lot. We did *Hiawatha* and when I sang it a second time, as part of a mass choir, it was conducted by the composer's daughter Avril Coleridge-Taylor. We did *Hiawatha* twice with her, once with a ballet group where we dressed

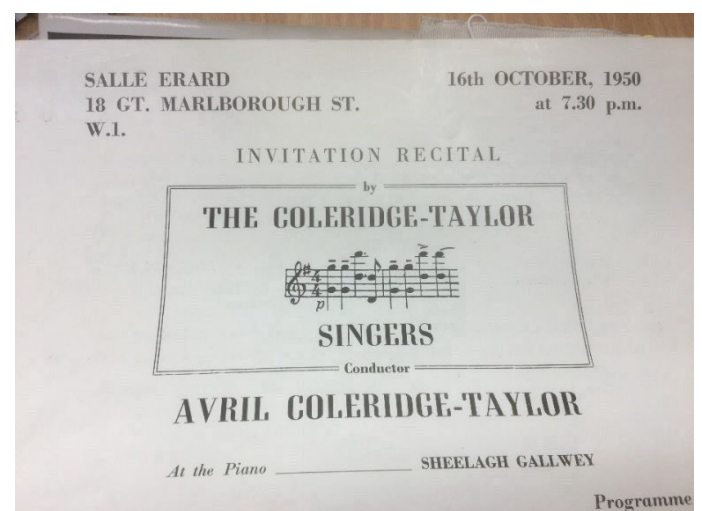
up as 'Indians' and pretended to dance. And being sopranos at the front we got talking to her. One day she said 'I'm thinking of starting a ladies' choir and would you like to join?' She got 25 people and I sang with her right until the time I got married. We used to sing at the Salle Erard - pieces by her father Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, or 'Deep River', and the 'Cantique de Jean Racine' by Faure. We're doing that now at Rosslyn Hill, having fun pronouncing the French - *comblé*. It's not *com-blay*, its *com-blet*.

Once we moved to West Hampstead I joined the Hampstead Choral Society (HCS) at the Marylebone Institute. That was in the era of classes. The lecturer Ben Dakin, who I used to meet in the tea-break, asked me to learn the Cries of London and sing them to his class. He then arranged for me to go to Lubeck in Germany and sing them there. HCS folded when the conductor Martindale Sidwell (who was rude) got the sack, and I joined the London Pro Arte. Meanwhile the librarian where I worked in Holly Hill wanted to learn conducting and we went to Malvern and did a course with Sing for Pleasure and started a little choir ourselves. I don't really conduct. I'm left-handed and people can't follow what I'm doing!

During the War in France they had formed A Coeur Joie ('with joyous heart'). They used to sing and be a cover for espionage as well! Sing for Pleasure was started in 1964 to learn from their techniques and train singers here. We all used to go every third year to their festival in Vaison and sing in the Roman amphitheatre. It was 'chant commune' from 7pm, then a visiting choir and a famous soloist and back down a rickety path into town in the dark for refreshments!

I think I'm a reliable singer with a good voice. I can still sing top C with a following wind. And I enjoy doing solos although I'm not competitive. I don't push but if I'm invited to sing I will. And on a Friday I go down to join the Ada Court Singers in Maida Vale. Gerry Pieti, who used to conduct the police choir, plays the piano for us. We start off singing something like 'Where have all the flowers gone?' Gerry brings loads of music. The latest was 'I Enjoy Being a Girl'! I particularly like comic songs like 'Someone is Sending Me Flowers' or 'The Usherette's Song'. During the lockdown Gerry would phone on Friday morning and say 'What do you want to sing?' And I'd sing to him over the phone! And if I want to learn something new I'll bring Gerry the music the week before so he can look it over. I find something new in the Oxfam shop or hear it on the radio - Handel, say, which can be difficult and I think 'Ooh, I fancy trying that'! I'm learning three of Handel's *Chandos Anthems* now with Pro Arte and Bob Chilcott's *A Little Jazz Mass* at Rosslyn Hill.

It's good fun to be in a choir. To me, its life. I get great enjoyment although you do have to get it – the music. You can't just go through the motions.



KOVE member Helen Rogers gives us

Some Do's and Dont's for Old Age – with a nod to the poets!

Wear a jacket, it covers your belly. Do not wear a long woolly jumper stretched across your middle or you might look like Humpty Dumpty.

Eat blueberries. Do not be afraid to spend on these, although expensive, so good for you.

Take advantage of your free bus pass. Do not sit at home alone too much. The Cll bus takes you all over the place and you will see some lovely things.

Love your family more. If no family love your friends more. Do not imagine you don't need them.

Try wearing a bright colour you have not worn in a long time. Do not wear too much grey. It can make you look like Miss Havisham.

Watch Prime Minister's Question Time on TV and feel free to jeer! Do not watch news about wars and cruel events if you can avoid it.

Teach somebody somethinglike knitting perhaps. Young people love to learn. Do not keep your talents to yourself

Jenny Joseph said 'when I am old I shall wear purple'. Well, I am very old. I have started wearing yellow - bright, bright yellow.

And one for the men, perhaps? Roger McGough wrote a poem beginning 'let me die a young man's death', something about when he is 101 and in bed with his mistress's daughter. Is that truly an idea to be encouraged?

Frances Eley has been involved with KOVE since she moved from Camden Town more than fifteen years ago. In the 1990s she was a member of Camden Council's Vulnerable Older People's Project advisory group; from 2002 of the Camden Quality of Life Group and is now involved with the Older People's Advisory Group which is supported by Age UK Camden <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/camden> and on 020 7239 0400). Here she reflects on the present crisis:

Heat or eat?

After the revelations of the Queen's speech, panic headlines seemed to appear in every newspaper: "we either eat or heat". Now, when did I see something similar? Look back in history and you will find examples everywhere. Prices are rising and income is going down. However, we always survive. Things are never as hopeless as they appear. I survived the Hungry Thirties, then the War along with millions of others; the Three-Day Week, electricity and gas being turned over all over the country; the Poll Tax riots. Vietnam War protests, student riots, the assassination of Martin Luther King. The building of the Berlin Wall and to top it all the threat of Nuclear War. I could go on and on. However dark the night, morning will come and, with a bit of luck, the sunshine.

Greening on our doorsteps

*KOVE trustee Suzanne Pawaroo writes about the **Jane Evans Nature Reserve** in Minster Road, NW2.*

In 2014, protected from development, this little site was handed over to Camden Council. Immediately people living nearby showed an interest in its care and maintenance. With Camden's help we said we wanted it to remain as an everlasting green space. Campaigner Jane Evans had prepared a plan for a row of sixteen fruit trees to be planted partly along the pathway and in other areas of the reserve. Today they yield good crops of apples, pears, crab apples and quince. From the outset Jane had been dedicated and diligent in her work in various ways towards the betterment and preservation of this site.

It was in 2016 that she so sadly died. As a recognition of her work, volunteers and other people involved in the nature reserve, wished to have a lasting memorial to her. Camden Council agreed to a name change of the site and so it became 'The Jane Evans Nature Reserve'. For the benefit of wild life and the well-being of the surrounding with its many native plants and trees the reserve remains closed to the public. We are pleased to open the gate when requested by people prepared to visit in a small group. Late in the afternoon on the Jubilee Saturday I showed round a party of celebrants from KOVE who clearly enjoyed the visit.

In future KOVE would like to support more Kilburn residents who seek to learn from Jane's and Suzanne's green endeavours.

Twelve things KOVE has done since 2002

1 Made cheap and accessible films (about bus-stops, the five ways to wellbeing, life as a carer etc.) to help older people speak out

2 Promoted discussion among older people who share the planning of activities and contribute to our consultations

3 Challenged poor care practice for older people at home

4 Called for longer road crossing times on Kilburn High Road and negotiated for a safer crossing outside Vivian Court, Maida Vale

5 Met regularly with the police and Camden's safety teams

6 Promoted street seating and helped get new benches installed

7 Called for a staffed public toilet on Kilburn High Road

8 Organised bench-to-bench walks to get people out and about

9 Supported Webheath tenants to improve their estate and get its

Tenant and Resident Association committee re-elected

10 Run a monthly film club and set up the Kilburn Debates with the British Society of Gerontology

11 Got creative with Connecting Parents and The Winch over lunch in Belsize Library

12 Helped to set up Ageing Better in Camden and worked through the Older People's Advisory Group

New trustees wanted at KOVE

Older people in Kilburn face new challenges. The pandemic has changed what we expect from health and community support. There seem to be so many gaps and communication blocks. Energy costs are out of control and many of us are struggling to buy food and pay rent. This means new discussions at KOVE and we hope new people getting involved from all of our diverse communities. We are looking for new trustees and to elect a new independent chair. Interested? **Get in touch before the launch of KOVE@20 at our AGM at 1.30pm on October 13th 2022.** Or come to the **KOVE Forum** which is held at the KILN theatre at 11am the first Tuesday of each month.



Have fun. Learn skills. Make films!

We've set up REEL KOVE. Your chance to get more involved.

We've been making films since 2004. There are 35 pieces to watch on our website – ranging from two minutes to half an hour. Pat Shaw, a wheel-chair user who took part in our work on the problems of home-care, was impressed with the impact of films used as evidence to make a case:

It's better than talking about it. It's hard to explain what you're trying to say about something as delicate as home-care and some people aren't readers. A report can be difficult to understand but if you show it on a screen, it brings everybody into it.

Some of our early films were shot by older people, working with Mel Wright on the street and in people's homes and edited by Nick Foxell and John Ladle of Acting Up. More recently we hired Nick to make several of our films. But now we want to get back to the beginning. Go back to making short films ourselves, working in teams and learning new skills – lighting, sound and

interviewing. Making best use of our films. So REEL KOVE is a film-making course. Nick will be the tutor and we'll involve skilled and specialist helpers as we go.

We'll have regular workshops talking about community life, the world around us and its problems. Thinking aloud. Telling stories. Asking questions. Finding out what other people think. Learning from each other. Building on what's gone before. Keeping up with new technology. Finding ways to be creative. Shaping a story. Finding out what works and what doesn't. Reflecting.

We'll launch the course early in September with a public showing of our new KOVE showreel. REEL KOVE will start in September 2022. The course will work by holding regular discussions with everyone involved. In between we'll work in small groups, sometimes loosely, sometimes as a team. If you're interested in being involved please get in touch. If you're new to KOVE and what we try to do this is your chance.

We hope to make ten short films during the project. And we'll show the films and get people to talk about them. We'll invite the people who live in Sycamore Court too.

What might be the themes to focus on? Green spaces. Public toilets. The 31 bus. Telling a personal story. Life during lockdown. The cost of living. Taking care.

REEL KOVE will start in September 2022. For more information and to register your interest contact John Miles on 07817 424356 or at johnmiles68@yahoo.co.uk

Kilburn Older Voices Exchange seeks a new Coordinator.

Could you be our new Coordinator? We want to appoint a new part-time worker to help the KOVE Trustees and Steering Group plan and support our activities and deliver community work to achieve a more age-friendly Kilburn in all its ethnic diversity.

According to anthropologist Farhan Samanani KOVE is 'one of the most mischievous and influential community organisations in Kilburn'. Since 2002 we have been involving older people and inviting them to talk about their concerns and share ideas. We bring out the importance of benches, street crossings, bus-stops, public toilets, neighbourliness and care-giving. We are known for our use of multi-media and will shortly be setting up REEL KOVE a workshop-style course for older people interested in film-making and community development. As part of Ageing Better in Camden we organised activities to reduce social isolation and we'll need your help to maintain these and to extend our inspirational programme of walks and cultural visits, locally and across London.

A commitment to the full citizenship of all older people is essential. We'll want you to ensure Kilburn's diverse older population is at the centre of planning and service delivery in our changing neighbourhood. You'll bring sound administrative skills, be able to improve and develop our office and communication systems and have a basic knowledge of charity finance and governance. We'll need you to work for us freelance, be available for two days a week and willing to work flexible hours from your base at home. Knowledge and experience of our neighbourhood will be an advantage but it is not essential.

The application process will begin with an informal phone conversation with the former coordinator, Mel Wright. After which, if you wish to proceed, we will ask for a CV and a statement of interest prior to an interview. If you share our ambitions, please get in touch. We want very much to hear from you. Contact: melwillwright@gmail.com

For more information about KOVE contact Activity Support Worker Deborah Knight, at deborah@kove.org.uk or on **07778 145787** or our Acting Chair, Lynda Stuart, on **07773 267505**, or our Research Associate, John Miles, **07817 424356**.

The KOVE website: www.kove.org.uk has up to date information on all KOVE activities. Charity number 1137417.

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*May's local walk in Mortimer Crescent NW6
- the 'Famous Faces' route (George Orwell).*