

Kilburn Good Neighbours

Newsletter Autumn 2018

Farewell Joanna

The mood at Abbey has been bittersweet over the past few weeks as we said goodbye to one of our most long-standing members of staff, the wonderful Joanna, who has been working at Abbey for a whopping 20 years! It was originally Joanna who set up the [Kilburn Good Neighbours](#) project. She is a local hero and much loved at Abbey for her warmth and great sense of humour! At Saturday cafe we said goodbye to Joanna in style, with gifts and pics with some of her longest standing Kilburn Good Neighbours pairings. Here is a message from Joanna to you all:



"It's my last week at the Abbey Community Centre this week and I'm saying goodbye to Kilburn Good Neighbours – the project I set up 20 years ago! I'm so proud of the good neighbour scheme that has grown into one of the centre's most long-running and successful projects, currently helping over 130 older people to feel less isolated and over 40 volunteers to feel useful, connected and gain valuable work experience.

It's been sad saying goodbye to some of the scheme members who I've known for many years and who have seen me through different stages of my life including the birth of both my kids and more! I'll also miss the volunteers – some of whom have become good friends over the years. But I won't be going far, I'm moving to the Hampstead Wells and Campden Trust in Hampstead to work as their Case Worker and Development Worker and a large part of my job will be visiting older people in Kilburn and Hampstead and helping them to apply for grants and other assistance.

I'm sure I'll be popping into the Abbey Community Centre when I'm in the area and I've offered to come along to any Abbey coach trips as a volunteer since I've loved taking our members to the seaside and all sorts of places over the years! With best wishes to all the Abbey Community Centre and Kilburn Good Neighbours – Keep in touch..."

Introducing... Gavin!

Good morning, good afternoon, good evening and goodnight to each and every one of you receiving the Kilburn Good Neighbours newsletter. I would like to introduce myself, my name is **Gavin Harper** and I work on the Tech Buddy and CHAPS (50+ men) programmes here at the Abbey Community Centre. I haven't had the opportunity to speak to all of you lovely individuals yet, but if you have any issues or feedback you'd like to talk about regarding the Kilburn Good Neighbours project, please feel free to get in touch with me as I am the key person looking after the project until we have a replacement for the amazing Joanna.



Gavin (right) with Kilburn Good Neighbours volunteers Gerry and John at our Volunteer Summer Party

All the lovely perks of being a part of the Kilburn Good Neighbours Project are still in effect so if you're interested in having a befriender to take you out or just to sit and have a chat with once a week, or if you need the help of a handyman to do odd jobs in the home, please feel free to contact me for more information on how we may be able to help you.

Latest news & a very exciting announcement!

Speaking of handy men, I would like to say a big thank you to Frank and Simon who are responsible for helping out on so many occasions, from gardening to fitting stoves in the kitchen. These two men are amazing volunteers who are a key part of Kilburn Good Neighbours' success.

In July we had the opportunity to hold a party for all the lovely volunteers that've done over 100 hours of volunteering for Abbey Community Centre, including KGN volunteers. With many volunteers attending, it was an amazing turn out with a lot of fun and games to be had. We also had many of the members of the board attend - it was amazing for them to see how many volunteers the centre actually has, and how much we are able to do for others who can't reach the centre.

Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

We're delighted that we're now able to officially announce: Kilburn Good Neighbours has won the **2018 Queen's Award for Voluntary Service**, the highest award given to volunteer groups across the UK to recognise exceptional service in the community.

This unique UK national honour was created by Her Majesty to mark the Golden Jubilee in 2002 and to recognise the outstanding contributions made to local communities by groups of volunteers. It's known as **the 'MBE for volunteer groups'**! This year there were 250 winners from across the UK. Tracey Crouch, Minister for Sport and Civil Society, said:

"Everyone who has received this award should be incredibly proud. Their service, commitment and care has a profoundly positive impact on communities throughout the country and I am delighted they have been recognised with this prestigious award."



As part of our award we received a very exclusive invite to the garden party at Buckingham Palace on Saturday 2nd June, which was very much enjoyed by Joanna and long-standing volunteer Yvonne. It was a beautiful day for it and they had a great laugh, making sure they queued up twice to sample all the treats on offer!

We would like to thank the Queen's Award committee and everyone behind the event organisation for a wonderful afternoon, as well as Her Majesty herself of course for this fantastic accolade. We are so proud of our dedicated, resourceful and caring volunteers and we hope this award will really help them to understand the importance of what they do at Kilburn Good Neighbours.

Community Festival – 15th September

On the **15th of September**, we are planning to have a community festival here at the Abbey Community Centre. It will be an amazing opportunity for you to see all the fun things and activities we get up to during the week that keep members of the community coming back to the centre day after day. Many different activities will be up and running for all ages: from face



painting, arts'n'crafts, henna painting, henna food tasting, Tombola, an introduction to Tech Buddies class, an older men's cake stall, table tennis and other stalls from community businesses. The point of this community festival is to bring together members of all our different projects and raise awareness of all we do here.

I know that many of you who receive this newsletter are less able to get to the community centre as freely as you may want to, but if you're able to get here with the aid of a volunteer, please do come along as we'd love to see you.

Tech Buddies

As I also run the Tech Buddies programme, I feel it's my responsibility to inform all of you that we have some fantastic volunteers who are available to come to your home and help you to build your confidence with the computer, phone or tablet you currently own, or would like to purchase in future.

Knowing how to use the internet is getting increasingly important with things such as contacting council services or doing online banking, and can help you stock your fridge with online food deliveries too. So if you give me a call, I can come to your home and meet you, find out what it is you'd like to learn more about, and will pair you up with a volunteer for a maximum of 10 weeks to build your skills and confidence with your tech.

We also have classes here at the community centre on Saturday mornings from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. They are a lot of fun and a great way to catch up with friends around a lovely plate of freshly prepared food - all for the price of £2 or less. On the third Saturday of each month, we tend to take out the tombola to have a bit of fun with a raffle too. So if you are able to get here, please do.

I look forward to having a chat with each one of you over the next few weeks. If anything comes up in before then, please feel free to give me a call. I'm in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays and the number for me is 020 7604 4823.

Very best wishes,

Gavin Harper

Kilburn Good Neighbours Manager



GDPR: Are we still okay to send you this newsletter?

As most of you will already know, recent changes in data protection laws mean that we need to make sure you are still happy for us to use your address and phone number to contact you about Kilburn Good Neighbours.

We are therefore asking anyone who **does not** want to be contacted any more to let us know by calling us on 020 7604 4823. If we don't hear from you, we'll assume you'd still like to be contacted by us and we'll carry on sending this newsletter your way. Many thanks.