The Newsletter of Wythenshawe Good Neighbours

Our International Women's Day (IWD) activities were a great success.

We were grateful for a Manchester City Council grant as part of their city-wide IWD celebrations on the theme of 'inspire inclusion'. It enabled us to arrange two events:

A talk by professional Heritage Consultant, Dympna Gould, at our Northenden Social Club Community Lunch.

Dympna focused on several inspiring Manchester women who made a significant contribution to a more inclusive society, such as novelist Elizabeth Gaskell, suffragette, then politician, 'Red Ellen' Wilkinson, and anti-racism campaigner, nurse and former Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Manchester, Louise Da-Cocodia, MBE.

Pioneer House High School students joined us, and enjoyed learning about their local community. Several contributed with interesting questions and observations.

Through the event evaluation, we received lovely comments from Members, such as:

"Very important to be educated. So informative. Dympna was so knowledgeable and very friendly – really good for us all to be inspired."

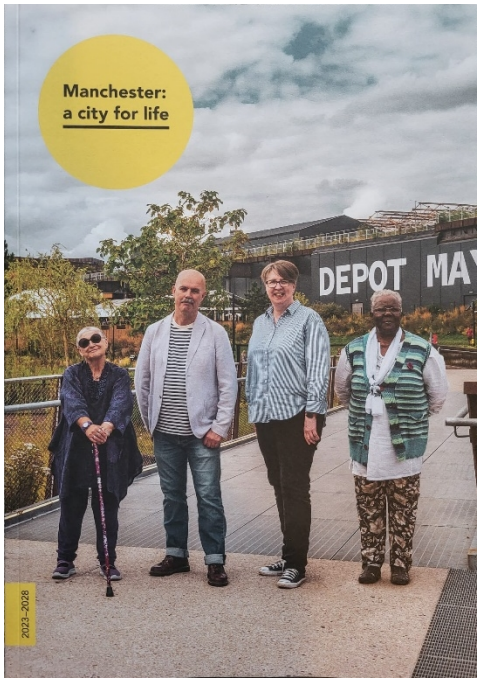
"Enjoyed very much how women have evolved in a positive way."

A visit to Elizabeth Gaskell's House in Manchester

The tour of the house included hearing about Elizabeth and her family and how they lived in the 1800s; famous people who visited (like Charles Dickens and Charlotte Bronte); and seeing where she wrote her famous novels. Members loved their visit:

"It was all very enjoyable. Particularly to hear about the 'writing community' at the time and details of domestic life…"

"I enjoyed the trip very much. I like looking back in time…"



Ageing Well with a new Age-Friendly Manchester Strategy

A new Age-Friendly strategy, underlining Manchester's plans for initiatives that understand and meet the needs of its older population, has launched.

Manchester: a city for life 2023- 2028 builds on the age-friendly work in the city over the last two decades. It sets out the vision and priorities for Manchester to continue as an age-friendly city 'where people can age happily with equality, respect, and independence' and 'where they have a voice in the life of the city and are economically, physically, and socially active'.

The strategy focuses on four themes: **Being heard and age equality**; **Age-friendly neighbourhoods** where we can all age in place; **Age-Friendly services** that support us to age well; and **Age-friendly work skills and money**.

Chairperson of Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Board, Elaine Unegbu, said: "We're celebrating the 20th anniversary of the city's age-friendly programme. There have been many changes over time, including a name change, but we've always campaigned for people in middle to later life living in Manchester to have equality and a voice in the affairs and plans of the city.

We've tried to influence the way services are designed and delivered, and continue to make sure our opinions and aspirations are taken seriously, and will continue to do so. Manchester's Age Friendly work is seen as trail-blazing and is recognised worldwide for its innovative approach and inclusivity."

Article reproduced courtesy of Your Local Voice newspaper. Photos by: WGNeighbours

"In Your Corner"

Age Friendly Wythenshawe (AFW) is a proactive network of age-friendly partner organisations and individuals working hard to inform and support residents to age well.

AFW runs projects throughout the year along with social opportunities for residents, speaker events and workshops. The network supports services delivered by partners such as Wythenshawe Good Neighbours, Tree of Life Centre, Carers Manchester, Wythenshawe Forum and local libraries.

One of its projects has been to develop Age Friendly Corners at venues around Wythenshawe. These are being updated for 2024 and include provision according to the size of the venue – from basic information boards to comprehensive corners with information, seating, and refreshments – such as at the Forum Library.

AFW also runs a **Winter Warmer campaign** whereby bags of useful information, practical home aids and treats are delivered to older residents to provide extra support during the winter (Wythenshawe Good Neighbours Members all received one of these bags last December).

AFW also has its own mobile app which brings together information and links to local age-friendly community organisations, national providers, and campaigns.

To download the app visit:
local-apps.co.uk/age-friendly-wythenshawe

Its **monthly Newsletter** is available at various venues and outlets across the local community.

Take part and get involved

AFW is keen to encourage older residents across Wythenshawe to visit its community 'corners', attend its events and social occasions, and even volunteer to help run its programme of activities.

If you would like to find out more, please ring Wythenshawe Good Neighbours in the first instance, Tel: 0161 905 3898, and we can put you in touch with AFW.

'You asked - we found out'

about bins, rubbish collection, litter and fly-tipping

We contacted Manchester City Council in response to several WGN Members' enquiries about bin collection, waste management, littering and reporting fly-tipping. Here's what we found out.

WGN Members were unsure how to book the Council's service to take away large items such as mattresses - when a visit to the tip is not an option for them. They also wondered if waste materials from home adaptations are included in the Council's service.

Answer:
The Council will collect large items from your home address. However, they **cannot collect from inside your property**. Items must be put as close to the pavement as possible, where the vehicle and crew can access and lift them safely - this should be a short distance. There should be no obstructions, such as walls, fences, gates and cars. Only items that can be lifted safely by two people.

If you can't move items easily, some local charities will collect for free. If you live in a managed building, your caretaker / building manager may be able to help.

Costs:

- You can have one **free** collection (of up to three items) a year (April 1 – 31 March the following year). They will only take the items that you have told them about. However, with this collection they will remove an additional three items for **£27** – if you give them prior notification.

- If you have already had a free collection, it is **£27** for up to three items and **£54** for up to six items. They'll only take items you have told them about.

If you have contaminated recycling bins, you can also get these emptied on this service. Ring the Council switchboard on the telephone number below for details.

Large items like cupboards / fridges must be empty (apart from their own fixtures).

Check the full list of items that they won't collect before you book their service online at: **Manchester.gov.uk** / Search: **Get rid of a large unwanted item.**

Examples include: wet and soaked items / **waste left in your home from building or repair work** / glass items / gas canisters / car parts / sharp objects / chemicals.

Not online? Ring the Council's switchboard Tel. number: 0161 234 5000.

'You asked - we found out'

Bin collection, waste management, litter and fly-tipping - cont.

Some WGN Members said that they struggle to take their bins out and that Council help isn't available each time - or they are not sure how to access the service.

Answer: If older residents are struggling to take their bins out, the Council can take their bins to a collection point and then return them. If this is of interest, you can request help by completing an online form at **manchester.gov.uk** Search: **Get help if you can't take your bins out/ Instructions**

WGN Members want to know what to do if they spot littering or fly-tipping.

Answer: Fly-tipping is the dumping of rubbish or unwanted items – either on land or in water. It can include bin bags, furniture, mattresses, carpet, fridges, washing machines and cookers. The Council deals with fly-tipping on **public land** only; not on private domestic or commercial properties, on railways, or in a river or canal.

The Council's website provides advice on Council waste management services, as well as litter and fly-tipping and what to do to report things like:

- abandoned vehicles
- a dead animal
- needles and syringes
- rubbish spilt during a Council bin collection.

It also gives guidance on what the Council isn't responsible for and gives advice regarding organisations that can help instead. For example, for dumped shopping trollies, **call Trollywise on 01926 451951** or email **trolleywise@wanzi.co.uk**

When dumped rubbish is reported correctly to the Council, it normally deals with it within five working days. They only change this timeframe to respond more quickly when rubbish includes dangerous materials such as chemicals, oil drums, asbestos or animal carcasses. **If the material poses a danger, phone 0161 234 5004.**

Visit Manchester.gov.uk / search: **Litter and fly-tipping.**

Not online? Ring the Council's switchboard number: 0161 234 5000.

Details have been taken from Manchester City Council's website (20/03/24): manchester.gov.uk

On your marks…Go Samantha!

Great Manchester Run fundraiser for WGN

Wythenshawe Good Neighbours' Manager, Samantha Days, will be lacing up her trainers for the 2024 Great Manchester Run. She is taking part in the city's famous 10k (just over 6 miles) to raise funds for our community activities for older residents.

Samantha said of her fundraising endeavour:
"I'm very proud to be doing the Manchester 10k on Sunday 26 May this year, raising funds for Wythenshawe Good Neighbours.

My training is going well and I'm hoping to equal, if not beat, my last time!"

Help us 'spread the word' as Samantha aims to reach her fundraising target of £250. Money raised will help WGN to bring costs down for a summer day-trip for its Members to enjoy.

If you know anybody who would like to make a donation (any amount very welcome), please direct them to Samantha's GoFundMe page at: **https://gofund.me/de73067a.**

WGN new Membership Scheme

The WGN Membership and Volunteer Drivers Scheme free trial finishes on 31 March 2024. Pictured (right in the photo) is Pat, who, a few weeks ago, took the 100th journey - and won a box of chocolates to celebrate! Thank you to everyone who gave our trial a go. As previously advised, from 1 April, annual Membership will cost £10 per person (£15 for two people living in the same household).

Many of you are now signing up as WGN Members – enabling you to access our Volunteer Drivers Scheme and enjoy other benefits, such as a personalised birthday and festive card and priority booking for our day-trips. Thank you! If you are unsure how to pay your Membership fee, please ring us on the office telephone number below (Monday – Friday, 9.30am – 4.30pm).

To join our Membership Scheme, please ring our office: 0161 905 3898.

Changes to Elections

The UK Government has introduced new laws within the Election Act 2022 around voting and elections (local, Greater Manchester Mayoral and UK national elections).

Key details include: (note: Manchester local elections are on **Thu 2 May 2024)**

Photo ID: voters who wish to vote in a polling station must show photo ID such as: passport, driving licence, senior citizens/disabled bus pass, blue badge, PASS card, defence veteran card, and EU national ID card **(photocopies are not accepted).**

Voters without such an ID card can apply for a free Voter Authentication Certificate (VAC) through this website: **gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate**. Voters who need help filling in the online form can email the Council's Digital Inclusion Team by email: **digitalinclusion@manchester.gov.uk or text: 07860 064 1228.**

Alternatively, voters can contact the Manchester City Council Electoral Services Unit about getting a VAC: **Tel: 0161 234 1212 / Email: esu@manchester.gov.uk**

Accessibility: all polling stations will have additional equipment and materials to assist disabled voters, and voters where English is not their first language, to vote. Staff will offer support at polling stations to make voting as stress-free as possible. Disabled voters can be accompanied/ helped by anyone over 18 in the polling station.

Proxy voting: voters who don't want to vote in person at a polling station can apply to vote by post or appoint a proxy to vote on their behalf.

Finding your polling station: voters are allocated a polling station close to where they live, as noted on the polling card (received by post around five weeks before an election). Voters are advised to bring the card with them to the polling station. **Unsure where your polling station is? Enter your postcode into this website for a local map: wheredoivote.co.uk/** (website is live when the Council announces an election).

Registering for elections: this is essential for people who want to vote. People are not automatically registered when they move house; it is essential to be proactive to register to vote. People who change their name by marriage or through a deed poll must request a change of name form or re-register to vote.

How to register to vote (if not already on the electoral register)

1. **Go to UK Government online portal: gov.uk/register-to-vote** and follow the simple instructions (National Insurance Number is required).
2. **Contact the Council's Elections Team: email esu@manchester.gov.uk** or Tel: **0161 234 1212** to receive a form by post - to complete and return to them.

Please take a little time to complete our WGN Members Satisfaction Survey

Your views and opinions are very important to us, and to our funders.

You will find enclosed with this Newsletter a copy of our annual Satisfaction Survey which gives you, and all our Members, a chance to have a say about our membership service, Volunteer Drivers Scheme, Newsletter, events, and more.

We will analyse all the survey insights to see where we are performing well, how we can improve, and what services you might like to see from WGN in the future.

Please complete the form and return it to WGN in the enclosed envelope **by Fri 10 May 2024**. Alternatively, you can hand the form to us at one of our community Coffee Mornings or Lunch. If you would like us to run through the survey form with you over the telephone instead, please ring us on Tel: 0161 905 3898.

Completed and received survey forms will be entered into a Prize Draw on 14 May 2024. Three winners will be chosen at random and notified on 14 May. **Each winner will receive a £10 Tesco voucher and a free, one-year WGN Membership.** Thank you for your support as we continue to develop our services.

Wythenshawe Good Neighbours

Flat 6, Thorngrove House, 9 Thorngrove Avenue, Brooklands, M23 9PQ

Volunteer Drivers Scheme Members: to book journeys, Tel: 0161 905 3898

Please also use the office number above for **general enquiries** about our services

Samantha Days: Manager
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Kathryn Wolstencroft: Coordinator
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Helen Davis: Volunteer Drivers Scheme Assistant
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Belinda Spencer: Volunteer Drivers Support Worker
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Content source: P.7 content edited from Manchester City Council 'Changes to Elections - fact sheets'.

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