

Spring 2025 edition

With gratitude and appreciation to our supporter The Worshipful Company of Innholders for making this newsletter possible.



Hospitality Action

# Golden Friends Newsletter

Dear Golden Friends,

Having begun the year wrapped in a cloak of damp, gloomy weather accompanied by freezing temperatures, the prospect of spring is something I am sure we are all looking forward to. I know I am!

With the coming of spring, gardens become green and lush, leaves unfurl, and we are greeted by the vibrant spectacle of colour as the different species of spring bulbs and shrubs cascade across the landscape throughout the season and into summer.

With so much to be dazzled by in early spring, it's easy to overlook the ethereal beauty of cherry blossom, which makes its presence felt all too briefly. Turn to P12 to read more about these beautiful flowering trees.

Take time to relax and enjoy all this issue has to offer.

Until we meet again in June, keep well.

*Cathie*

Mention in the Golden Friends Newsletter does not imply support or recommendation by Hospitality Action

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For advice, support or to request a Grant Application form,  
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# News from HA

## A message from CEO, Mark Lewis

Welcome to our first Golden Friends newsletter of 2025.

It's the most colourful edition I can remember, as befits the arrival of spring, the season of regrowth and rejuvenation. Our Symbols of Spring article is a riot of colour, as it celebrates the Japanese 'Sakura' cherry blossom season.

Back home in Blighty, I hope your snowdrops, crocuses and daffs are looking splendid!

At Hospitality Action, the start of the new year brings a thrum of activity, as our tireless fundraising team once again swings into action to deliver the lunches, dinners, and challenges that bring in the funds we need to continue our work.

One annual fixture on the fundraising calendar has already come and gone. Our friends at Northcote, a luxury hotel in Lancashire, held their Obsession food festival for a 25th year, in January and February.

Over seventeen nights, the festival featured 21 renowned chefs together boasting 27 Michelin stars. Among them were HA patrons, Angela Hartnett OBE and Alain Roux. The festival raised well over £70k for us, taking its support for us down the years to over £500,000. Amazing!

We may have officially reached springtime, but when the sun disappears, temperatures can still be biting. If your fuel bills are rising steeply as you try to stay warm, do turn to the back page and read about our Winter Fuel Grant.

And, if these longer nights are leaving you feeling a little blue, don't forget you can always call our GF Helpline and chat to someone.



### Also in this issue

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# Golden Friends News

## Your festive messages to the team

We were delighted to receive so many cards at Christmas along with some wonderfully crafted gifts including hand-made bookmarks, a beautiful bauble to hang on the office tree and some delicious biscuit and chocolate treats for us all to enjoy. On behalf of the whole team 'thank you' all so much.



## The Golden Friends Annual Questionnaire

As many of you will recall, we have in the past posted out our annual questionnaires. These have been invaluable in helping us to keep pace with issues affecting the lives of our Golden Friends, as well as ensuring we have the most up to date contact details on file.

This year, instead of posting forms out and waiting for these to be returned, our volunteers will be making calls out to every member to check the information we hold is correct and to see how you are all doing. These calls have already begun and our volunteers are looking forward to speaking with you soon.

When calling, and to reassure you that the call is not a scam, our volunteers will explain they are calling on behalf of Hospitality Action to conduct a quick questionnaire over the telephone on behalf of the Golden Friends scheme.

# Grants and Grant Giving

## Winter Fuel Grant

### What is the Hospitality Action Winter Fuel Grant (WFG)?

Our Winter Fuel Grant (WFG) is a one-off annual grant of £200, intended to help with winter utility costs for households on a low income. It is completely separate from the government's Winter Fuel Payment and Cold Weather Discount. Golden Friends can apply for the Hospitality Action WFG via the application slip in the Golden Friends newsletter between 1st November 2024 until 31st March 2025. To date, we have already approved 150 WFG applications totalling a staggering £30,000 towards helping our Golden Friends to stay warm!

### How do I apply?

If you have not applied already and are considering doing so, please complete the application slip on the back page of this newsletter, and return to us at: Hospitality Action Grants Team, 62 Britton Street, London, EC1M 5UY.

### What happens after I've applied?

Once we receive your WFG application slip and bank statement we can assess whether you are eligible for a WFG and will contact you with a decision. If your WFG is awarded we will contact you to confirm the date your £200 payment will be received. It is important that if you have provided an email address that you check your inboxes/spam/junk folders before contacting us, as we may have sent you important information about your WFG application.

### How long does it take for a decision?

Applications are assessed in the order that they are received, and assessment times vary depending on the individual's circumstances. The most common reason for a WFG application to be delayed is missing information, so please ensure that you carefully follow the instructions on the slip.

### What other help can we offer our Golden Friends?

In addition to our WFG Golden Friends can also apply for a Main Grant for support with a wide range of needs including mobility equipment, white goods and funeral costs. If you are struggling financially, receive an unexpected bill that you cannot pay, or have a specific health-related need, please do not hesitate to get in touch with our Grants team.

We will advise if you are eligible for a grant and also offer other advice/support resources; including benefit entitlement advice from our dedicated Hospitality Action Welfare Benefits Advisor, specialist debt and budgeting advice from our partners at PayPlan, and expert housing advice via our Shelter Plus referral scheme.



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# Advice and Information

## Care needs assessment

As we get older, many of us find we begin to need help with everyday activities – such as getting up, washing and dressing, and using the bathroom. Needing some support with certain things is a normal part of ageing but it's normal to feel a bit reluctant to tell someone you are finding it tricky to do the things you used to do independently.

If you are struggling to manage on your own and think you may need some help, a care needs assessment is the first step towards getting the right support and describes the process where your local council looks at your care needs and determines what kind of services would help you, like home care support or moving into a care home.

### How do I get a care needs assessment?

Contact your local council's adult social services department and request a care needs assessment. The assessment is free, and you are entitled to one regardless of your income, savings, or level of need.

If you prefer, a friend or carer can request the assessment for you, if you give your permission. If you are unable to make decisions for yourself due to a lack of mental capacity, someone can request the assessment on your behalf.

### What does a care needs assessment involve?

A social care professional will usually come to your home to see how you are managing daily tasks. You may also be offered an assessment over the phone or online, but if you would rather have someone visit you in person, just ask for a face-to-face assessment.



### How do I know if I am eligible for help from social services?

Each council has its own process for assessing needs, but they all follow national guidelines to decide who qualifies for support. In making their decision, they'll look at whether you are having difficulties with daily activities and whether this is affecting your wellbeing and quality of life. A financial assessment will also be done to determine if you qualify for financial help with the cost of care services, and if so, how much you will need to contribute.

It's a good idea to reach out for an assessment if you feel that social care might help you manage better. It's the best way to find out what support is available to you.



If you are in need of advice and support, please contact Welfare Benefits Advisor, **Suad Hersi** at [shersi@hospitalityaction.org.uk](mailto:shersi@hospitalityaction.org.uk) Please allow Suad time to get back to you. If you feel your case is urgent, please explain this at point of contact.

# Fundraising and our Supporters

We are fortunate to have countless dedicated supporters across the UK who devote their time, energy, and resources to fundraise for those Hospitality Action helps. Here we share examples of what some of our supporters have been up to on our behalf.

## **BOOM** **BATTLE BAR**®

### Boom Battle Bar's Cycle to Dubai

Renowned for hosting unforgettable nights out, we knew when Boom Battle Bar reached out to fundraise for us it wouldn't be an ordinary fundraising event!

Keen to keep things lively and to celebrate the opening of Boom Battle Bar Cambridge, the team decided to cycle 4,400 miles on static bikes, virtually travelling from Cambridge all the way to Boom Battle Bar Dubai! The larger-than-life challenge brought together employees and supporters alike, who all pedalled tirelessly to hit their mileage target, and raised over £3,000.



Ellis Bowden, UK Training Manager at Boom Battle Bar said: “We know that working in hospitality can be super fun and exciting, but for some people it's not always the case. Hospitality Action were the perfect charity for us to work with because the support, guidance and help they give to individuals in need is remarkable. We wanted to be able to help raise some funds and increase visibility of this great cause.”



## London Essence Hike For Hospitality

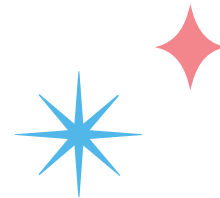
The incredible team at London Essence went above and beyond by conquering the 3 Peaks in 24 hours in our honour. This demanding feat involves scaling the highest peaks in England, Scotland, and Wales, pushing both mental and physical limits.

Toby Ballentyne, Head of On Trade – South said: “We knew we wanted to do something positive which brought us closer together as a team and gave something back to our industry, which has gone through many challenges and pressures since 2020. We decided to fundraise for Hospitality Action as they are a great resource for those in our sector most affected by financial and mental health struggles.

Matt Dooley in our team is a Chairman for Mountain Rescue and not only is regularly on call for emergencies but is often on Scafell Pike – as well as having done the 3 Peaks many times before! Having Matt gave us an opportunity to capitalise on his expertise and experience – and so London Essence decided to collectively do all 3 Peaks in 24 hours.



— EXQUISITE DRINKS —  
FROM DISTILLED BOTANICALS



We raised a total of £3,065, and Britvic topped this up with another £1,000 which hugely boosted our fundraising efforts and exceeded our target of £4,000. It was certainly a challenge but such a positive experience that brought us closer together and helped us understand each other better. The highlight was certainly feeling exhaustion on the way back down Snowden but seeing the golden sunrise hit the side of the mountain! We'll look to do more of these in the future.”





## THE PIG Hotel £1 on the Bill

During the month of December our friends at THE PIG Hotel Group added an optional £1 donation to guests' bills and raised an astonishing £13,296! This phenomenal support will make a life-changing difference, helping countless hospitality families in crisis.

Tom Ross, CEO of THE PIG Hotel Group said: "Hospitality Action is a charity we keep very close to our hearts and is a cause we have been supporting across THE PIGs for many years. Since our first PIG opened in 2011, many of our team members have benefitted from the help and support of Hospitality Action, so it's important to us to do as much as we can to support this fantastic organisation, and our industry, to make a positive impact.

We found it very straightforward to set up the voluntary £1 menu donation, the key is to make sure everything is clear for both your guests and your teams. We add a sentence to the top of our restaurant menus, making it clear that the £1 voluntary donation they'll see on their bill is helping to raise money for Hospitality Action – and that it is completely optional."

## THE PIG



THE PIG Hotel Directors and Hospitality Action

## The Society of the Golden Keys of Great Britain and the Commonwealth

Each New Year we are honoured to be the chosen charity of The Society of the Golden Keys. The Society is a friendly association of hotel concierge, and their members are easily recognised with their emblem of two golden crossed keys on their lapels.

In the modern digital world where information is overflowing a hotel's concierge is available for guests to talk to prior to, during and post travel. They make the best recommendations using their first-hand knowledge and can open every door in London and beyond using their unique connections.

The Society's annual Gala Dinner is always a night to remember, and this year's was hosted at the brand-new Peninsula Hotel in London. Over four hundred guests enjoyed a champagne reception, three course meal and live music as they danced the night away. A highlight of the event is always the amazing raffle which had over fifty prizes up for grabs including afternoon teas, spa days, theatre tickets and hotel stays. A staggering £20,000 was raised for which we are profoundly grateful.



The Society of the Golden Keys Committee (2025)

We are extremely grateful to everyone who joined forces to fundraise on our behalf last year and to all those who generously gave their time to volunteer with us at some of these events too and we can't thank them all enough.

**2025 is already shaping up to be another busy year for the charity, so watch this space to see what else we get up to!**

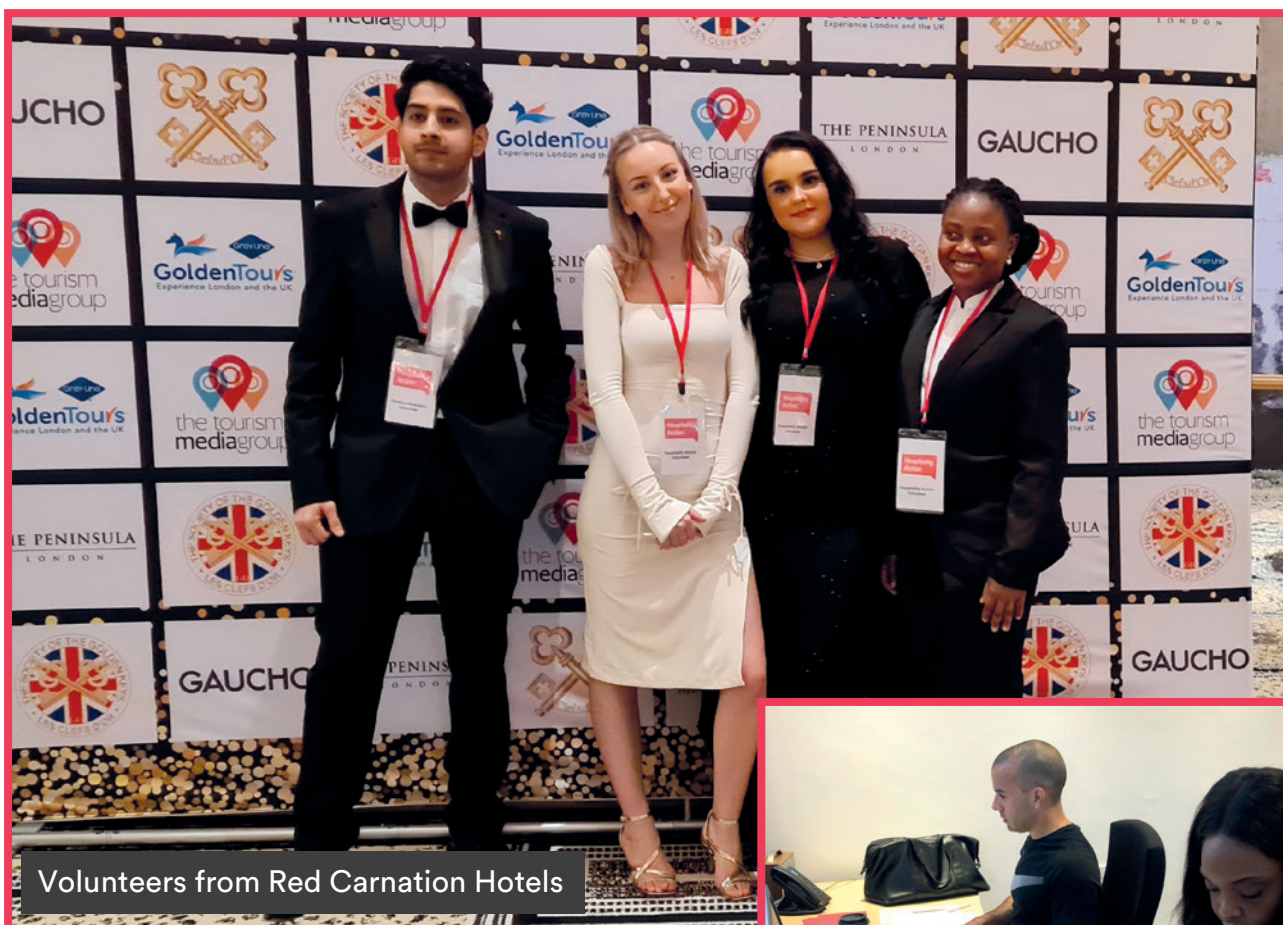


# Our volunteers

It goes without saying that we simply couldn't do all that we do without the commitment of all the amazing people who give their time to volunteer with us.

Throughout 2024 we were busy building meaningful partnerships with our corporate supporters who now offer their employees paid volunteering days each year so that their employees can volunteer with charities like ours.

Alongside a variety of fundraising activities for hospitality employees and customers to get involved in - such as adding a special food or drink item to their menu which generates a small donation to HA; or encouraging employees to take part in a range of physical challenges like running a marathon; a group trek; a hike or even jumping out of a plane, we are also offering our corporate partners volunteering opportunities too.





Employees from corporate partners Red Carnation Hotels, the Mandarin Oriental and APEX Hotels have been volunteering with us, giving their time to help at fundraising lunches, conferences, dinners and galas, as well as helping out in the office personalising birthday cards, preparing Christmas cards and making befriending calls out to Golden Friends.

We are delighted to have been able to welcome so many new people into our community of volunteers who are contributing to the work already being done by all those who have been volunteering with us for many years running our regional boards, organising and hosting a wide range of fundraising events from golf days to quizzes to Chef's Dinners and so much more!

We are so very grateful to each person who has given their time to support Hospitality Action and Golden Friends throughout the years and to all those who joined us in 2024, and already in 2025!



# Symbols of Spring

With the coming of spring, and the blooming of the cherry blossoms, these beautiful pink flowers are a symbol of renewal and the ephemeral nature of life, and much welcomed after the winter darkness. The most well-known species is the Japanese Cherry Tree or the Sakura.



## Sakura

Sakura is a Japanese term that describes both cherry blossom trees and the cherry blossom flowers themselves. Sakura symbolises not only the return of spring but also of renewal and hope, and it also forms a part of Japanese identity, with its roots connecting it to philosophy and even samurais.

## Different varieties of cherry blossom

There are over 100 different varieties of cherry blossoms in Japan. Yoshino Cherry is the most common, with oval-shaped petals which change from pale pink into white. The Weeping Cherry blooms in red, white or pink, while the Ukon Cherry transforms from pale yellow to light red to pink.



## What do cherry blossoms symbolise?

Since cherry blossoms are one of the shortest-lived flowers – only blooming for a couple of weeks each year – cherry blossoms represent renewal and the fleeting nature of life. Due to the bloom's extreme popularity in Japan, this is one of the most widely accepted meanings of cherry blossoms.





### Where are the best places to see cherry blossom?

Japan has around 300 varieties of cherry blossom flowers, which are spread across the country, from Fukuoka in the south to Sapporo in the north. One of the best places to see cherry blossoms in Japan is Osaka Castle Park, where over 4,000 cherry trees blossom between late March and early April. Tokyo's Ueno Park is another popular spot, made all the more picturesque in the evening as strings of paper lanterns illuminate the park.



### Japan's unofficial national flower

The cherry blossom is the unofficial national flower of Japan, although Japan is not actually the cherry blossom capital of the world. This title is currently held by Macon, Georgia, in the USA, which is home to over 350,000 cherry blossom trees. Japan sent the trees over to the US in 1912 to represent friendship and goodwill.

### Cherry blossom festival

Japan's cherry blossom season, or Sakura, has been celebrated for centuries, and it's clear to see why, as the country takes on a temporary pink hue. Cherry blossom festivals are called Hanami when picnics, gatherings and parties are held beneath the canopy of the cherry blossom trees – and have done so for hundreds of years.





## Japan's cherry blossom trail

The famous Japanese blossom trail begins in the south of Japan around the middle of March. The cherry blossoms start in tropical Okinawa in early February then travels north in a movement called 'Sakura zansen', tracked right to its final stop in the northernmost island of Hokkaido in early May.

Although predicting when the blossom will bloom is not an exact science, the season lasts for around one month, from the time of the first bloom to the last. Once the cherry blossom trees have flowered, their delicate beauty usually only lasts a week, with the petals constantly falling to the ground and carpeting it in a swathe of pink, and is part of why the blossoms can represent fragility and fleeting beauty in Japanese culture.



## Ancient trees

Although cherry blossom trees establish themselves relatively quickly once planted, the lifespan of these trees is usually between 15 to 25 years although, in optimal conditions, these beautiful trees have been known to reach 30 to 40 years of age.

The Jindai Zakura is believed to be the oldest and biggest cherry blossom tree in Japan with an recorded age of over 2,000 years! The Jindai Zakura is 10.3m tall (about 33.8 ft) and impressive trunk-circumference of 11.8m (about 38.7 ft). This magnificent specimen is located within the grounds of the Jissoji Temple in the amanashi prefecture of Japan, located in the Chūbu region of Honshu.



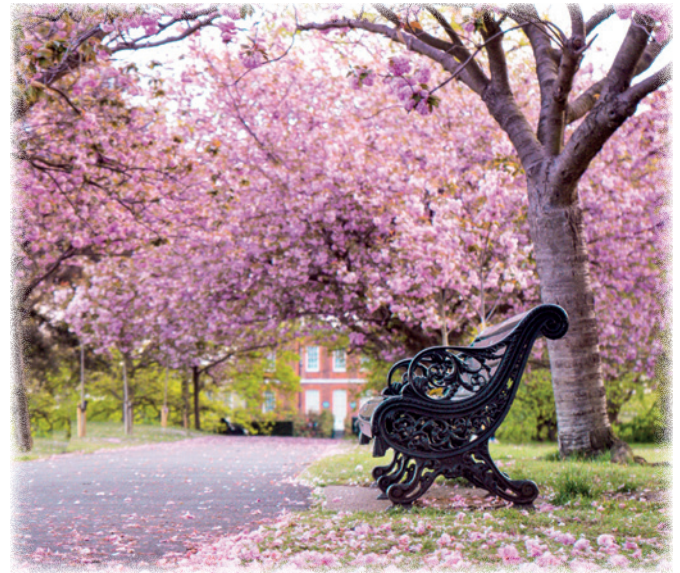




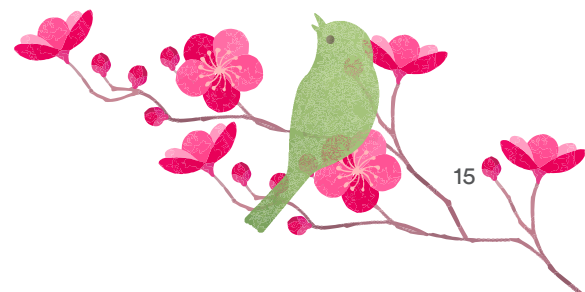
### Did you know ...

The flowering cherry trees are said to have been introduced to the UK during the reign of Henry VIII and there are now around 7,500 Sakura trees planted in over 900 locations across the UK. The wild cherry and the bird cherry variants are the most common native blossom trees in the UK, along with 323 other indigenous blossom tree varieties.

- The UK's top three locations for cherry blossom trees are Derbyshire, Greater London and Greater Manchester.
- Greater London has 90 Sakura Blossom trees which can be found in picnic hotspots like Regent's Park and Bushy Park.
- 50 Sakura trees can be found in Swinton, Pendlebury and Daubhill, Greater Manchester.
- Hampshire, Newport and County Londonderry have the least amount of cherry blossom trees with only 11 trees in each area.



So, if you'd like to take a stroll under clouds of pink and white petals you don't need to travel to Japan to appreciate the beauty of these marvellous trees as there are many locations across the UK.





# Spring recipe idea

## Pavlova

Pavlova, a deliciously light and popular dessert, is claimed to have been created by a chef in Wellington, New Zealand when the renowned Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova toured New Zealand and Australia in 1926.

A dessert known for its soft, willowy appearance, created to represent the ballerina's tutu, the pavlova is best paired with a variety of fresh fruits, whipped cream and flavoured syrups or sauces.



### You will need:

- 4 egg whites (use the yolks in another recipe)
- 250g caster sugar
- 1 tsp cornflour
- 1 lemon  
½ finely zested, ½ zest pared, plus 1 tsp juice
- 250g lemon curd
- 300ml double cream
- 2 tbsp icing sugar

**Prep time** 30 mins  
**Cooking time** 1 hr 30 minutes  
**Serves** 6

Energy	Protein	Carbohydrates	Sugars	Salt
2124 kj (508cal)	7.2g	97.6g	89.4g	87.1mg





## How to prepare:

### Step 1

Heat the oven to 140C/120C fan/gas 1.

Use a 20cm cake tin or plate as a template to draw a circle on a large sheet of baking parchment in pencil, then turn the parchment over and use it to line a baking sheet.

### Step 2

Tip the egg whites into a large, clean bowl.

Beat for 2-3 mins using an electric whisk (or using a stand mixer) until frothy. With the motor running, add 1 tbsp sugar and beat for 30 seconds.

Continue adding the sugar gradually, beating continuously until you have a thick, glossy meringue – it should hold stiff peaks when you lift the beaters, and will take 10-15 mins.

Rub a little of the meringue between your fingers – if you can feel the sugar, continue beating for a few minutes or more until all the sugar is dissolved.

### Step 3

Add the cornflour and lemon juice and whisk again to combine.

Use a dab of the meringue to stick the corners of the parchment to the baking sheet, then spoon the remaining meringue into the centre of the circle template.

Spread the meringue out into a disc using a palette knife or spatula, creating a slight dip in the middle.

Bake in the centre of the oven for 1 hr 30 mins, then turn the oven off and leave the pavlova to cool with the oven door closed for at least 2 hrs or overnight – this helps prevent cracking. (Keep in a cool, dry place for up to 24 hours before serving).

### Step 4

Spoon 200g lemon curd into the centre of the pavlova.

Whip the cream, remaining curd, the icing sugar and the fine lemon zest into soft peaks using an electric whisk or standing mixer.

Pile the whipped lemon cream over the curd, spreading it to the edge.

Scatter over the remaining pared zest on the top for added decoration.



# Health and wellbeing

## Sit less, move more

Getting older shouldn't mean an inevitable end to being active.

While the type of activities we are able to do will vary from person to person, maintaining a reasonable level of activity in later life can not only help to reduce the risk of serious illness but help us feel better for longer and can also open up opportunities for us to socialise with new people too.

As spring beckons and we shed our sluggish winter habits, getting active can seem a little daunting so it's good to start small to build up our activity levels gradually. A mix of everyday activities that fit in with our daily routine count as exercise, so it's good to look for simple ways to help us move more. Every step counts – even if it's just a few extra here and there.

Activities that work our cardiovascular system help keep our heart, lungs and brain healthy, such as:

- gentle chair-based exercises
- extra gardening
- walking around the block or out to the shops
- gentle cycling
- swimming
- tennis, bowls or walking football
- dancing

The most important thing is to find ways to incorporate a little extra physical activity into our daily routine and doing something that we like – to make it more enjoyable and help us build our activity levels throughout spring and beyond.



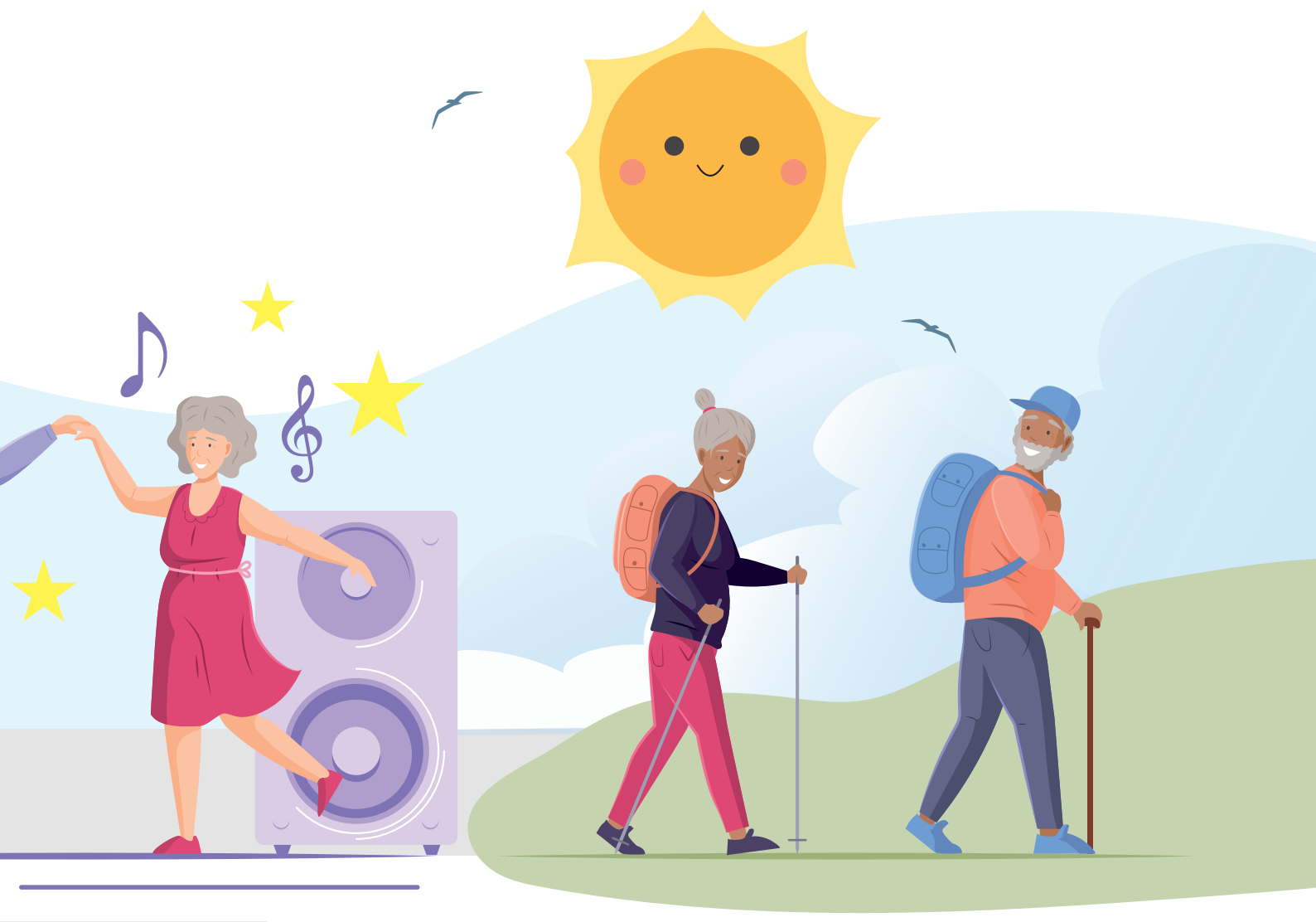


## Walking

A daily walk, even if just a 15-minute stroll around the block or to the shops can help us:

- Lose weight – to combat weight gain in later life when our metabolism slows down.
- Maintain a healthy heart – walking helps to increase heart rate and helps towards reducing heart disease, high blood pressure and the risk of stroke.
- Reduce the risk of certain cancers – physical activity is known to help reduce the risk of certain cancers including breast and bowel cancer.
- Lower the risk of diabetes – maintaining a healthy weight with regular exercise can help reduce the risk of Type 2 diabetes.
- Strengthen bones – walking can help to prevent the onset of osteoporosis and reduce the risk of bones breaking.
- Improve mental wellbeing – being outside in the fresh air helps to reduce levels of stress, improve symptoms of depression and aid better mental health.

Walking is an activity that can be done in isolation or as a social activity with friends, so can help to tackle feelings of loneliness and isolation.



# Swimming

## The benefits of swimming

Here's why you should take the plunge!

Staying active is a crucial aspect of maintaining a healthy lifestyle at any age, but it becomes particularly important as we age, when various health issues can have a greater impact on our bodies. The good news? Increasing your physical activity with sports such as swimming is a fantastic way to help prevent and manage health conditions.

Swimming is a great way to add some cardio to your routine too. Thanks to its low-impact nature, it provides an effective workout while being kind to your body, helping reduce the risk of injury. No matter your exercise goal, it's never too late to get back into the pool!

In addition to being a fun recreational activity and a way to cool off on hot days, swimming is a terrific form of exercise for older adults and their caregivers. It's a low-impact sport, which is beneficial for people suffering from sports injuries or conditions like arthritis. For older adults especially, maintaining an active lifestyle is critical for overall health, and many take to swimming regularly. This post examines some of the most important benefits of senior swimming for loved ones as they age.

### 1. Low-Impact Exercise is Ideal for Ageing Joints

Swimming is low-impact, non-weight-bearing exercise. That means it doesn't put pressure on the spine, knees, or hips; in fact, the buoyancy of water supports some of your body weight and reduces the effect of gravity, which alleviates some of the regular strain on these joints. It's especially helpful for seniors who have conditions such as arthritis or fibromyalgia. According to a 2016 study, swimming helps to relieve pain and improve quality of life among people with knee osteoarthritis and fibromyalgia.



### 2. Improves Flexibility & Range of Motion

By reducing the strain on the joints, the buoyancy of water allows swimmers to move their limbs more easily through the full range of motion. Doing this regularly helps to keep joints supple and improves flexibility, an important factor for older adults' health and well-being. For aging people with a limited range of motion on land, stretching in the water is a good way to improve flexibility.

### 3. Improves Stability, Reducing Risk of Falls

Swimming works all major muscle groups, resulting in stronger muscles overall, especially the upper body, core muscles, and leg muscles – all important for posture and stability, which reduces the risk of falls. One study conducted in Australia evaluated 1,700 men age 70 and older and found that those who swam were 33% less likely to fall compared to men who did not swim. What's more, men who participated in other forms of exercise in addition to swimming (such as golfing or using treadmills or stationary bikes) were no less likely to fall compared to those who only participated in swimming.



#### 4. Promotes Cardiovascular Health

According to the Swim Strong Foundation, swimming for 30 minutes per day can reduce coronary heart disease (CHD) by 30 to 40 percent in women. Men can reduce their risk of developing type 2 diabetes by more than 10 percent if they swim breaststroke for 30 minutes three times per week, burning an estimated 900 calories. Regular aerobic exercise such as swimming reduces blood pressure and helps to raise good cholesterol levels (HDLs). A 1 percent increase in HDL cholesterol reduces the risk of dying from heart disease by 3.5 percent. If an ageing adult has a medical condition, such as a heart condition, that might be aggravated by aerobic exercise, it's best for them to check with their doctor before beginning a new activity. If a healthcare provider says it's safe to swim, the benefits to cardiovascular health will be significant.

#### 5. Provides opportunities to socialise

Senior swimming programs or group water exercise classes provide opportunities for older adults to socialise and meet new people. One study found that participating in group exercise contributes to balanced health among older adults, providing a sense of community and social connectedness that can help to reduce feelings of social isolation and depression. Because it's easier for older adults with conditions such as arthritis to participate in swimming compared with other forms of exercise, people may be more likely to stick with group swimming lessons compared to high-impact exercises to achieve long-term health benefits.



#### 6. Improves Sleep

A 2009 study found that 50% of older adults have difficulty sleeping, and poor sleep leads to an increased risk of mortality. Another study found that aerobic exercise, such as swimming, improves self-reported sleep and quality of life for older adults. Swimming burns a lot of calories and works all the major muscle groups, leaving older adults physically tired enough to make falling asleep easier. Many also say that swimming leaves them feeling relaxed, which is a necessary ingredient for a good night's sleep. Because swimming is a good way to relax the body and the mind, it can also help to reduce stress and anxiety, boosting both mental and physical health.



Increasing levels of activity, especially as spring makes us feel more energised and affords us the opportunity to get out and about more, is not about getting fit but about moving more in whatever way works for each of us.

Before getting started, and if you are worried about any health issues you may have, it is always advisable to talk to your GP to make sure you are in the best health for whatever activity you choose to do.

# Competition Time!

Congratulation to our winter wordsearch competition winners, **Mrs E Ingman (Northern Ireland)** who receives M&s gift cards worth £30 and to SECOND PRIZE winners, **Ms V. Williams (Peterborough)** and **Mrs A. Dyke (Devon)** who each receive an M&S gift card worth £15.

Why not try your hand at finding all 28 hidden words in our cherry blossom themed grid below. Please ensure your completed entry reaches us by **FRIDAY 2nd MAY**. Good luck!

B	L	O	S	S	O	M	S	Q	W	R	R	W	S	S
H	C	D	W	O	R	C	I	O	U	Y	T	A	E	T
C	H	E	W	H	A	P	P	Y	P	C	X	T	I	A
N	E	A	O	J	R	E	T	N	I	W	Z	C	R	R
U	R	R	R	O	B	A	A	C	H	A	N	H	O	S
L	R	T	G	R	T	Y	U	M	N	B	V	T	T	Q
A	Y	H	T	R	E	A	S	U	R	E	D	R	S	E
D	E	X	P	L	O	R	I	N	G	A	Z	E	T	N
M	S	D	N	E	I	R	F	B	N	M	X	E	Y	I
I	L	O	V	E	E	L	K	R	A	P	S	S	U	H
R	S	L	A	T	E	P	S	P	R	I	N	G	T	S
E	S	A	K	U	R	A	B	V	P	O	I	U	A	N
B	L	O	O	M	E	S	I	R	P	R	U	S	L	U
E	K	U	L	S	E	A	S	O	N	Z	D	J	L	S

ADMIRE  
BLOOM  
BLOSSOMS  
CHERRY  
CROWD  
EARTH

EXPLORING  
FRIENDS  
GROW  
HAPPY  
LOVE  
LUKE

LUNCH  
OBAACHAN  
PETALS  
SAKURA  
SEASON  
SPARKLE

SPRING  
STARS  
STORIES  
SUNSHINE  
SURPRISE  
TALL

TREASURE  
TREES  
WATCH  
WINTER

Entries should be marked GF competition, Hospitality Action, 62 Britton Street, London, EC1M 5UY and returned to us no later than FRIDAY 2nd MAY.

Your full name \_\_\_\_\_

Your address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Scam alert!

## The digital landline switchover

The UK's landline network is being upgraded to become fully digital. The upgrade was planned to be completed by January this year, but the deadline has been extended to 2027.

In the future, when the network upgrades are finished, landline calls will operate using digital technology called Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), also known as Digital Voice.

This may mean some older devices using your landline connection, such as home phones and personal care or security alarms, may need updating or they will no longer work.

Landline providers are writing to their customers to explain what the switchover means and will provide advice and support with steps needed to make the necessary changes. The digital switchover does not involve customer paying any fees so if you receive any calls, text messages or emails asking you to share your personal information and bank details – **DO NOT RESPOND.**

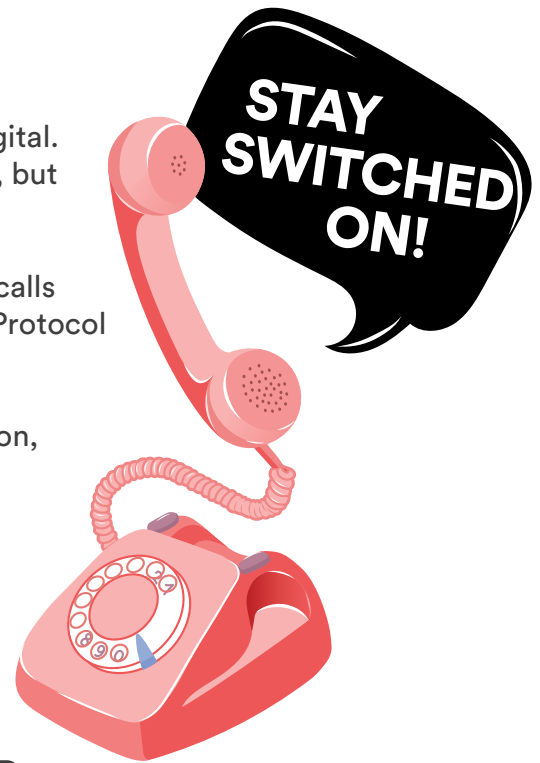
Your landline provider will never ask you to make payments or verify your payment information in order for your landline to be upgraded to the digital service.

### How to protect yourself from scam calls

- Treat all unsolicited phone calls with caution, even if they claim to be from BT, or any other organisation.
- Never share your personal information, payment information or passwords over the phone. If you are asked to do so, hang up.
- Ignore calls from unknown numbers. If the call is important, the caller will leave a voicemail or try to contact you another way.

### What to do if you think you've been scammed by a cold call

- Contact your bank immediately if you think you have shared your payment details with a scammer over the phone. Your bank will take steps to protect your money and give you advice.
- If you have sent money through a bank transfer your bank should be able to refund your money, partially or in full, depending on how much was stolen. The same should apply to any money taken by scammers from your bank account.
- Report phone scams to Action Fraud online via <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk> or by calling **0300 123 2040**. Action Fraud records details of all scam reported and passes the information onto the police for them to investigate further.
- If you receive a call from anyone claiming to be from BT, or any organisation, and the caller is asking for payment or your personal information, end the call immediately. BT will never contact you by phone asking you to share your personal information or ask for payment for any service.



# HA's Winter Fuel Grant

Applications for our annual Winter Fuel Grant; a one-off payment of £200 per household to help Golden Friends on low incomes with money towards their winter fuel bills, will remain open until 31 March 2024. To apply, simply complete and return the cut-off slip below along with a recent full month's copy of bank statements for all accounts you hold.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If you are currently in receipt of a regular bi-monthly grant from Hospitality Action you do **not** need to apply for the Winter Fuel Grant as you are automatically eligible and will have received your WFG grant.

## To qualify for a Winter Fuel Grant you must:

- live in your own home (owned or rented) - not a nursing home/ residential care home or with family) and be responsible for paying the fuel bill.
- have no non-dependant members of your family living with you (other than your spouse/partner).
- have a total weekly income of no more than £213.85/week (single) or £307.45/week (couple), OR receive an income-related benefit, such as Pension Credit or Universal Credit.
- have limited savings—below £5,000 if you are single and below £8,000 if you are a couple.

If you meet all of the above criteria and would like to apply for this grant please complete and return the cut off slip below and send with a recent full month's bank statement/s showing all your income and any savings.

Please note, if you do not provide a recent statement for your bank account(s) when you apply this will delay your application.

The Winter Fuel Grant is again kindly sponsored by the Worshipful Company of Innholders.



The Winter Fuel Grant is again kindly sponsored by the Worshipful Company of Innholders. You will be notified once your application has been assessed and, if you qualify for a Winter Fuel Grant, the award will be paid into your bank account.

Please tick each of the statements below to confirm your eligibility and complete your name and address in the section below. Send this slip, together with a recent full month's bank statement to:

**Hospitality Action Grants Team, 62 Britton Street, London, EC1M 5UY**

- I/we live in our own home (owned or rented - not a nursing home/residential care home or with family) and pay the fuel bill.
- I/we have no non-dependant members of our family living with us (other than my spouse/partner).
- I we have a total weekly income of no more than £213.85/week (single) or £307.45/week (couple), **OR** receive an income-related benefit, such as Pension Credit or Universal Credit.
- I/we have savings below £5,000 (single)/£8,000 (couple).
- I/we have enclosed a full month's bank statement or all accounts I/we hold'.

Name (BLOCK CAPITALS) \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Partner Name (BLOCK CAPITALS) \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse/Partner Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

