



# Breathe Easy Westminster

Support group for residents, families and carers of those with respiratory conditions

For this free Westminster support group email [breatheeasywesminster1@gmail.com](mailto:breatheeasywesminster1@gmail.com), or call 020 7548641438

To become a member: [www.breatheeasywestminster.com](http://www.breatheeasywestminster.com).

## PERSONAL NOTE...



A huge **THANK YOU** to Tess who has been giving her time to this group for over a decade. It's clear the group would not exist without her and she's given much time and energy to making it valuable for the group.



### **A LITTLE BIT ABOUT ME:**

I'm Meg, your new newsletter (and all things admin) writer. I'm volunteering as I'm interested in respiratory health, I have asthma and allergies myself and studied Public Health. I'm also keen to learn a bit more about what is going on in the Borough and feel a part of it. I won't be able to make many of the Ada Court meetings due to work, but will join when I can. I welcome any feedback on the newsletter and/or requests for what you would like to read more of!

# Breathe Easy Westminster, Key Updates

## **KEY CONTACTS:**

If you have a question relating to the group, from now on please get in touch with [breatheeasywestminster1@gmail.com](mailto:breatheeasywestminster1@gmail.com), or call Meg on 07548641438 now instead of reaching out to Tess directly.

## **GROUP MEETINGS:**

Our face-to-face meetings continue on the 3rd Monday of each month from 11am at the top roof garden floor, Ada Court. Cristy makes sandwiches on demand on the day (£2 each) and beverages and biscuits are free as always. For those with internet access, we also have a zoom meeting on the 1st Friday of each month at 12:30pm. I will be in touch with an overview of the upcoming talks for the New Year.

## **RECAP:**

### **Mital's Top Tips for How to Avoid a Chest Infection:**

- Reduce risk factors within your control
- Your body likes routine!
- Take your medication as prescribed
- Be aware of your normal symptoms vs when you are unwell
- Don't think antibiotics + steroids, think antibiotics or steroids
- Water is your best friend
- Exercise is free with multiple benefits
- LTOT = live prolonging, AMBOT = QoL only
- Plan for the future in advance, the budget has already got to us!



## **Butekyo Breathing**

For those who missed our November Zoom, we were introduced to [Butekyo](https://butekyoclinic.com) Breathing which is all about breathing through the mouth, rather than your nose. [Here](https://butekyoclinic.com) [https://butekyoclinic.com] is an app if anyone is interested further.

# Asthma and Lung UK, Key Updates

## **KEY CONTACTS:**

Get in touch with their 24 hours a day helpline on 0300 222 5800, email them on [helpline@asthmaandlung.org.uk](mailto:helpline@asthmaandlung.org.uk) or text them via Whatsapp on 07999 377 775.



For those with COPD, Asthma and Lung UK have a best care that can help you find out whether you're receiving the right care for your COPD and what to do if you're not: [COPD Patient Passport](#)

## Keeping Well This Winter

### [NHS Winter Campaign](#): Keeping yourself and your home warm

Keeping warm over the winter months can help to prevent colds, flu and more serious health problems such as heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression. Low indoor temperatures can have a serious impact on your health, especially if you have medical conditions or are older.



With the rising cost of living, simple changes can help to keep you and your home warm now

- \* Try to reduce draughts – you can fit draught excluders around doors cheaply.
- \* Keep your bedroom windows closed at night.
- \* Wear several layers of thinner clothing – this will keep you warmer than one thicker layer.
- \* Ensure you are eating enough and having hot drinks.

**REMINDER -** Make sure you get your prescription medicines before your pharmacy or GP practice closes for holidays. You can order prescriptions via GP or pharmacy websites, by calling them, or via NHS-approved apps. Ask a friend, relative or volunteer to collect medicines for you. You can also order your repeat prescriptions via the [NHS App](#), as well as make GP appointments.

## LONELINESS OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON:

You might be more likely to feel lonely at this time of year, you're not alone. Why not try one of the activities happening in the borough?

### Check out the [Abbey Centre's Activity Classes](#)

From coffee mornings, Tai Chi to easy fitness classes, there's something for everyone and activities across all price points.

Join In-Deep's Over 50s friendly [community choir](#) based in Pimlico who sing a range of songs from the 50s and 60s musicals. No audition necessary and everyone is welcome. The free sessions are on Monday evenings twice a month.

You can also move from the comfort of your own home with **Asthma and Lung UKs [Feel Good Fridays!](#)** Every Friday from 10.30 to 11.15AM.

The Royal Collections Trust hosts community webinars - see the programme and how to join [here](#).



## THE WINTER BLUES:

It's well known that the changing seasons can affect our mood. Some people might experience Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), where the changing seasons have a large impact on their daily life. [The Mental Health foundation](#) has shared some resources on the symptoms and tips for managing these.

## Financial Support:

The government announced in July this year that access to winter fuel payments would be restricted from this winter to people claiming pension credit, with the aim of saving the UK economy £1.5bn a year. As [Brian Cox](#) says, make sure you [check if you're eligible](#) for Pension Credit by **21st December 2024**.

### **The Westminster Winter Fuel Payment Fund**

Now open for applications until Feb 2025 through Age UK Westminster. The fund is intended to help older people no longer eligible for the Winter Fuel Payment. Help will be in the form of supermarket vouchers of £200 or £300. To apply [contact AgeUK Westminster](#) by phone on 020 3004 5610 between 10 am and 2pm, Monday to Friday or by email at: [enquiries@ageukwestminster.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageukwestminster.org.uk) [www.westminster.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support/household-support-fund](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support/household-support-fund)

### **SCAM AWARENESS:**

Independent Age has published a report on the hidden cost of scams for over-65s. Read more [here](#) for their tips on how to spot them.

**6 in 10** older people have been the target of fraud or a scam



On average, over-65s lost nearly

**£4,000** each to fraud and scams



## New Research:

**DID YOU KNOW?** *The air indoors can often be more polluted than the air outdoors.*



- Sources of indoor air pollution include activities such as cooking, cleaning using chemicals/disinfectants, smoking, burning candles/incense, poorly ventilated buildings, pet hair and mould.
- This [study](https://tinyurl.com/3unztw7t) [https://tinyurl.com/3unztw7t] looked at how people define and understand the concept of 'clean air' within their home setting. It finds that some common perceptions and practices that are intended to improve air quality may pose health risks. For example, cleaning using common supermarket products is seen to remove pollution from the home, while limiting ventilation is considered as providing protection from polluted 'outdoors'.

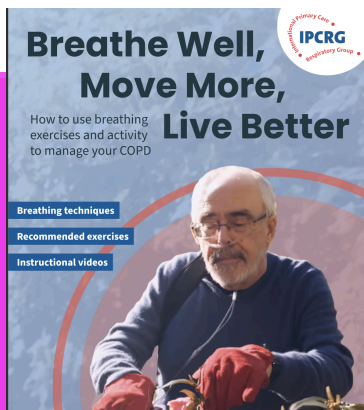
## Have Your Say:

Following the publication of Lord Darzi's Report on the state of the NHS, the Department for Health & Social Care is undertaking a comprehensive survey and community engagement exercise on their new **10 Year Health Plan** for England.

[Take the survey here!](#)

**CHANGE**  
NHS

**Help build a  
health service  
fit for the future**



## Further Reading:

The International Primary Care Respiratory Group's (IPCRG) new COPD Magazine is for people with COPD to support their self-management.

[Issue 1](#) is available now and includes an infographic on the breathing in a rectangle exercise

 [<https://ow.ly/N8xp50U4fZn>]

**Have a very Merry Christmas  
and Happy New Year**



If you have any questions or want to find out more about anything included in this newsletter, please contact [breatheeasywesminster1@gmail.com](mailto:breatheeasywesminster1@gmail.com) or call 07548641438.