



Letters from Lockdown

"PHOTO-WALKS AND INSTAGRAM IN MY 'CORONA UNIFORM'"

At Ageing Better in Camden we firmly believe in amplifying the voices of older people in our communities. Now, more than ever, we strive to support our members to raise their voices and share their experiences.

Far from being a great equalizer, the Covid-19 pandemic has revealed some of the deepest inequalities that have often remained hidden in our society. Our members have been writing a weekly newsletter for one another, to keep informed and connected in these challenging times. It has also brought us all closer together as we share our personal experiences of lockdown.

Here, Celia Cockburn shares her experiences.

Hello OPAG,

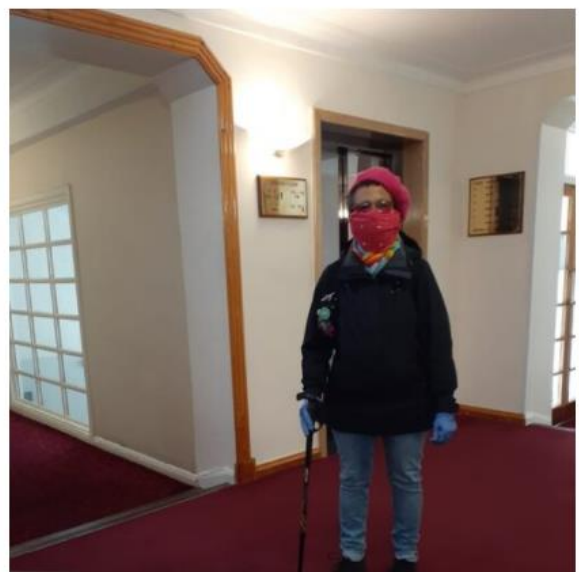
This is Celia Cockburn writing this week's newsletter.

Like the OPAG members who wrote earlier emails, I am doing my best to stay safe. Judging by my family's response to a photo of me in what I call my 'corona uniform', you would be roaring with laughter at sight of me.

My combination of beret, gloves, and bandana mask additionally has been great at reducing my allergic response to pollen. It's the social distancing that I am relying on most against COVID-19, though, with my walking stick sometimes used to remind people to stay away!

As I live far from any family, I am accustomed to using Skype to see and talk to my siblings and family in other countries. During lockdown, however, coping with living on my own in a 4th floor flat is manageable only because of south facing windows. I have never before wished so much for a balcony or garden. I am sure many of you have similar issues.

I try to have a power walk, with photography, a few times per week. An amateur photographer since childhood, I am now using Instagram to share new and



Celia's 'corona uniform'

old photos. I also have been teaching myself how to use Instagram hashtags (#) to reach wider audiences.



Some images from Celia's Instagram page

I've never been great at drawing or painting, only photography. Having been encouraged by Hazel East to do some art I downloaded a free android app. Using my finger, & lots of guessing, I've surprised myself by (kind of successfully) doing a few pieces.

Having taken part in a Japan House session on Chibi, a word I'd never heard before, I decided to try to make some. Below are Chibi characters of local Ageing Better staff, plus one of myself.



I am one of many volunteers working on research for the Courtauld Art Institute's Digitisation project during lockdown. The Courtauld has been great at bringing their digitisation volunteers together via twice-weekly Zoom meetings. They also have started an #artclub where we are sent a weekly art challenge. It has been great fun.

Celia Cockburn

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