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Rotherhithe SE16

## LONDON BUBBLE THEATRE'S OLDER ADULT PROGRAMME HEALS SOCIAL ISOLATION THROUGH THEATRE-MAKING PROJECTS

*"We don't feel invisible when we're with Bubble. Instead of being ignored, strangers came up to us and congratulated us on our work. We weren't pushed to the side, people saw us."*

According to [Age UK's loneliness report](#), people aged 50 and over are 1.6 times more likely to be often lonely if they live alone and 3 times more likely to be often lonely if they don't feel that they belong to their neighbourhood. According to the Office for National Statistics, this will double by the year 2030.

[London Bubble Theatre Company](#) offers unique opportunities for older adults to be creative and express themselves. We believe in removing barriers to accessing the arts and, for over 10 years, have been delivering weekly theatre groups for socially isolated older people living in sheltered housing. Our [Tea Break Theatre](#) groups are often the only activity taking place in the communal lounges and the only opportunity for people to meet their neighbours. For older people who lack the confidence or ability to leave their homes, having something quite literally on their doorstep is vital.

Understanding how challenging it can be to try something new, especially in later life, our latest project aims to overcome it with a new play created and performed by older adults. Over the last 2 months a specially formed Older Adults Company, all aged over 55, have come together to devise a piece of theatre from scratch. Drawing upon a rich tapestry of life experiences; the ideas, characters and story have come entirely from the older adults and have been shaped with London Bubble theatre artists. From Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October, we are taking their creation [Beneath the Papers](#) on tour.

This heart-warming new play about family, love and self-reflection will be performed in the lounges of sheltered housing and for public audiences. The cast know from their own experience how taking part in theatre activities with London Bubble has supported their wellbeing. "There have been times I've had very little," shares Boma Braide, a member of the Older Adult's Company and second time performer who is not afraid to speak about the mental health benefits of theatre making, "I'm happy to be here and a part of something bigger. Bubble gives me hope."

"The show is a testament to the fact that play knows no age limit," says Artistic Director, Marie Vickers. "By bringing theatre into sheltered housing units we challenge stereotypes surrounding older adults in creative pursuits and give them the opportunity to express themselves, share their stories with each other and even the wider community. [Beneath the Papers](#) is a big chance for our older adults to show everyone what they can do."

[Beneath the Papers](#) is being performed free for a public audience at London Bubble Theatre on Friday November 10<sup>th</sup> at 2pm and 5pm. Special press entry will also be granted to other dates on the tour, please contact us for the full tour schedule and to RSVP.

**For Boma's story, further inquiries and to access media content please contact:**  
**Kehryse Johnson-Fraser**  
**Communications Manager**  
[Kehryse@londonbubble.org.uk](mailto:Kehryse@londonbubble.org.uk) | 0207 237 4344