Serving South East London & Kent
Stories, News, Classes & Tips
to help your recovery journey

THE LINK

Quarterly newsletter from
HOME LINKS PHYSIOTHERAPY

SUMMER 2026

Welcome to the Summer 2026 edition of **The Link**

The Home Links Physiotherapy South East London and Kent team is growing, and this summer, we are delighted to welcome Gennaro, who joined us as a physiotherapist in March and Cynthia and Will, who will join us over the summer months. This issue of The Link has dementia at its heart: from a patient defying expectations through physical excellence, to a closer look at vascular dementia and the difference early physiotherapy can make. We also hear from Hannah Witherow as she reflects on her first five months leading Home Links Physiotherapy Croydon and Sutton.

A message from Joanna...

There is so much to celebrate this summer. Our Bexley Business Awards win is a proud moment for the whole team, and a reflection of the community we have built together. This issue centres on dementia and how physiotherapy can offer more than many people realise. J's story is beautiful proof that a diagnosis is not an end to physical endeavour. We also welcome new faces and celebrate accreditations and training that keep our quality of care at the highest level. If you or someone you love could benefit from our support, as always, we would love to hear from you.



Joanna Ward MSc MCSP HCPC
Registered Physiotherapist,
Founder & CEO

Home Links Win the Bexley Business Awards 2026

Home Links Physiotherapy is incredibly proud to have won the Health and Wellbeing Business of the Year Award at Bexley Business Awards, a recognition that reflects not just the quality of care delivered to patients, but the collaboration, dedication, and shared values that make it possible.



Jo attended on the night alongside several members of the team, and the evening was a fantastic showcase of the strength of the business community in Bexley.
Jo reflects:
"Winning the Health and Wellbeing award at the Bexley Business Awards is a tribute to every member of the Home Links team, and to the patients and community we are so proud to serve."
Find out more about the Bexley Business Awards at www.enjoybexleyheath.co.uk

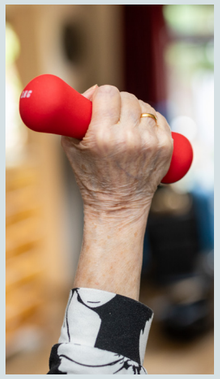
Michelle is a Dementia Friends Ambassador

Alzheimer's Society DementiaFriends

Michelle, our Business Operations Manager, recently attended a Dementia Friends Information Session run by Walfinch Homecare and left a fully accredited Dementia Friend. The session, led by a trained Alzheimer's Society Ambassador, explored the small but meaningful changes that make a real difference to people living with dementia in the community. Michelle shared:
"It made me much more aware of how people living with dementia can struggle day to day. Patience is key, and I'm really pleased to now be a Dementia Friend."
To find out more information contact Clare at Walfinch Dulwich, Bromley & Sevenoaks via bromley@walfinch.com

Serving South East London & Kent
Telephone: 020 3834 8471 | Email: referrals@home-links.co.uk
Follow us on our socials: @homelinksphysiotherapy @home-links-physiotherapy
www.homelinksphysiotherapy.co.uk

hcpc registered



Understanding Vascular Dementia and How Physiotherapy Can Help

What is Vascular Dementia?

Vascular dementia is the second most common form of dementia after Alzheimer's. It occurs when reduced or blocked blood flow to the brain (often following a stroke or series of mini-strokes) deprives brain cells of the oxygen and nutrients they need to function.

How Physiotherapy Helps

Physiotherapy can help people with every type of dementia and at every stage. Dementia often presents with physical symptoms: slow processing, poor balance, muscle stiffness, weakness, and an unsteady or shuffling gait. Physiotherapy addresses these issues directly by building strength, improving balance, and supporting cardiovascular health to slow further decline.

The Case for Early Intervention

People can benefit at any point, however, it's good to begin physiotherapy either in the early stages or following a sudden decline or hospital admission. Early intervention is significantly more effective. It draws on neuroplasticity (the brain's ability to form new connections) to boost blood flow, manage vascular risk factors, and delay both physical and cognitive decline.

What Progress Looks Like

Progress typically means stabilisation rather than cure. We work on maintaining abilities for longer, safer movement, greater confidence, and reduced reliance on carers. Improved mood, better sleep, and lower anxiety are common benefits alongside the physical gains.

How Carers Can Help

Carers play a vital role. Beyond the obvious, such as reinforcing gentle daily exercise, removing trip hazards, and learning safe handling techniques, sharing what they know about the person is important. Knowing the patient's interests, history, and preferences helps your physiotherapist take a truly person-centred approach.

Are you living with vascular dementia or supporting someone who is? Early physiotherapy can make a real difference. Contact us to find out how we can help.

DEMENTIA IS A DIAGNOSIS, *NOT A CEILING*

When you picture physiotherapy for someone in their 70s living with dementia, you might not imagine tree climbing. But for one of our clients, who is independently mobile, living on his own, and determined to stay that way, that's exactly what he can continue to enjoy. We would like to share his story with you, and he has asked to be referred to as J.



Twice a week, J travels by bus to tai chi, where balance work underpins everything. In his physio sessions, he lifts weights, jogs, and continues to work on balance (including climbing trees in the park).

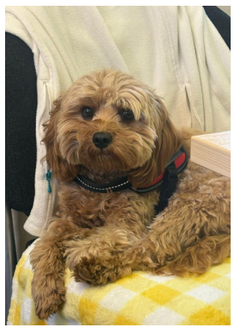
Each element of his programme has a purpose. The weights build muscle and bone strength, and help support his arthritic knee. Jogging raises his heart rate and increases blood flow to the brain. The balance work trains his body to stay steady in unpredictable situations, reducing his risk of falls.

His sessions also include tasks that challenge the brain and body at the same time. The brain has a remarkable ability to adapt and grow new connections (neuroplasticity), even later in life.

J is building muscle, protecting his arthritic knee, and proving that living with cognitive impairment doesn't have to be the ceiling on what the body and brain can achieve together.

Have you worked with our incredible physiotherapy team?
Share your story by emailing: admin@home-links.co.uk

A Smile on Everyone's Face - Teddy the Therapy Dog



Eileen has attended Jo's Monday FitMove Rhythm class for a couple of years, but lately her dog Teddy has been making moves of his own. Newly qualified as a therapy dog at just two years old, Teddy visits care homes, accompanies therapeutic walks with Jo's daughter, and is a faithful Thursday presence at Bexley Buddies above Bursted Wood surgery. Eileen is a proud volunteer at Bexley Buddies and is always pleased that Teddy "puts a smile on everyone's face."

HOME LINKS PHYSIOTHERAPY CROYDON & SUTTON

Q&A with Hannah: Five months in and making her mark

Hannah Witherow launched Home Links Physiotherapy Croydon and Sutton at the start of 2026. We caught up with her to hear how the first five months have unfolded.



How has the community responded since you launched?

The response has been really encouraging. In the early months, there was a lot of learning, but by March and April, referrals were coming in steadily. People are getting to know the service and finding their way to us directly, rather than through Jo or the South East London and Kent team. Home Links Physiotherapy Croydon and Sutton is becoming a recognised name in the area.

Who are your typical clients and what do they come to you for?

The caseload is varied, which reflects the breadth of what we're able to offer across Croydon and Sutton. Our work involves supporting older people with mobility or balance issues, but also post-operative rehab, complex neurological conditions, cardiac surgery and young people with long-term conditions who want to improve their function and quality of life at home.

What is your most memorable moment so far?

One patient stands out. Claire has MS and fractured her ankle at home after a fall. As a regular runner, it was a shock to discover that she could only manage a few steps unaided.
She had never been offered support for her MS symptoms at this point. When she came to me, she could just about weight-bear, and we worked through the ankle rehab quickly, but we didn't stop there.
We kept going to improve the full picture: balance, walking, strength, core, coordination, fatigue management, and stress. In a relatively short space of time, she has gone back to work, spent a day in the office, been on holiday with her husband, and is now booking ahead and making plans. She manages her fatigue well and uses meditation to support her stress levels.
Claire brings an extraordinary attitude and real curiosity, and working with her has been one of the highlights of these first months. It's a perfect example of why I wanted to build this service here.

What does being part of the Home Links Physiotherapy community mean to you day-to-day?

You never feel like you're on your own. Running your own business and leading a caseload in the community carries a risk of feeling isolated, but that hasn't been my experience at all. There is always someone to talk to, whether it's a clinical question, something complex or unusual, or just working through a decision.
On a personal level, the flexibility has changed how I look after myself, too. I schedule my exercise classes into my diary, and they stay there. I can get outside between clients and managing the business. That balance matters, and it's something I didn't always have before.

What's exciting you most about leading Home Links Physiotherapy Croydon and Sutton right now?

Alongside one-to-one physiotherapy and running the business and team, I'm exploring therapeutic horticulture as part of my offer. Activities such as working with clients outdoors, engaging with local community growing spaces, and using time outside as part of the therapeutic process. The evidence around outdoor activity, engagement, and mental health is strong, and it fits naturally with the kind of whole-person approach Home Links Physiotherapy is built on. Watch this space!

We are proud to support Hannah as she leads and grows Home Links Physiotherapy Croydon and Sutton, building a service that is already making a real difference to the community.

If you're a physiotherapist ready for a new challenge and would like to start your own physiotherapy business with a trusted network behind you, we'd love to talk. Please contact Joanna on Joanna.ward@home-links.co.uk or go to join.home-links.co.uk

Springboard Physio CPD

Springboard is Home Links' dedicated physiotherapy training day, and this month, the team heads off-site to focus on excellent, evidence-based care. It's a chance to learn from each other, deepen clinical skills, and stay at the forefront of contemporary physiotherapy.

This summer also brings more physiotherapist networking events, connecting the wider community of physios, clinical professionals, and patients we're proud to work alongside.



Serving South East London & Kent | **Telephone:** 020 3834 8471 | **Email:** referrals@home-links.co.uk
www.homelinksphysiotherapy.co.uk

Serving South East London & Kent
Stories, News, Classes & Tips
to help your recovery journey

THE LINK

Quarterly newsletter from
HOME LINKS PHYSIOTHERAPY

FIT MOVE
by Home Links Physiotherapy

Home Links Physiotherapy FitMove Classes

WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE YOUR MOBILITY AND STRENGTH

Physio Rhythm, Belvedere

When: Monday 10am or 11am *(2 class times)*
Where: Belvedere Community Centre, Mitchell Close, Belvedere, DA17 6AA
45min exercises set to music. Ideal for those who need to improve all aspects of fitness.
Book via Age UK Bexley website at: ageuk.org.co.uk/bexley/ or call: 020 8300 0883

Physio Pilates, Orpington

When: Monday 11.30am **Where:** Orpington Village Hall, 311 High Street, Orpington, BR6 0NN
Trial classes available when booked in blocks of 4 weeks. £20 per class.
Ideal for those who need a bespoke approach to participate in group pilates.
Book via fitmove.co.uk or call: 020 3834 8471 or email: referrals@home-links.co.uk

PD Champions, Bromley

When: Monday 4pm (not 5th Monday of the month) **Where:** St George's Church, Bickley, BR1 2BE
This class is for people living with Parkinson's who want to use exercise to improve symptoms and the ability to live well with Parkinson's.
Book by calling: 07553 082148 or email: bromleyparkinsonsbranch@gmail.com

FitMove Physio Intro Course - Stronger together

Thrive Club at Orpington Village Hall

Come and try our FREE classes at Thrive Club Orpington at Orpington Village Hall
When: 1st, 3rd Tuesday of month **Time:** 1.30pm | Giving you the opportunity to try our physio-led classes on rotation: Boost, Power, Rhythm, Pilates, Barre & Flex.
Book by calling: 020 93834 8471 or email referrals@home-links.co.uk

FitMove Boost

ONLINE CLASS

When: Thursdays 10:30am **Where:** Online **Cost:** £8 pay as you go
Ideal for those recovering from illness or recent deconditioning, or those who want to participate in regular exercise. This physiotherapist-led class uses seated and standing exercises to build fitness, strength, balance & coordination at your own pace.
Book via fitmove.co.uk or call: 020 3834 8471 or email: referrals@home-links.co.uk

FitMove Power, Belvedere

When: Thursday 10am **Where:** Belvedere Community Ctre, Mitchell Cls, Belvedere, DA17 6AA
This class offers a circuit-based approach to functional strength training, designed to build full body strength, improve stability and support bone health. Exercises adapted for all levels.
Book via Age UK Bexley website at: ageuk.org.co.uk/bexley/ or call: 020 8300 0883

FitMove Power, Slade Green

When: Friday 10am **Where:** Slade Green Library, Chrome Rd, Erith, DA8 2EL
This circuit based class is for people who need to build their functional strength, improve their stability and support bone health. Exercises adapted for all levels.
Book via Age UK Bexley website at: ageuk.org.co.uk/bexley/
or call: 020 8300 0883

Read more online:
SCAN HERE

Serving South East London & Kent
Telephone: 020 3834 8471 | Email: referrals@home-links.co.uk
Follow us on our socials: @homelinksphysiotherapy @home-links-physiotherapy
www.homelinksphysiotherapy.co.uk

hcpc registered
JLinks Physiotherapy Limited, trading as Home Links Physiotherapy. Company Number: 11843830. Registered in England and Wales.