



## Pacesetters for a better Enfield

Anyone doubting the role, purpose and value of the Over 50s Forum needs only look at our record and our campaigns to make life better in Enfield and reflected in this Newsletter.



We provide a platform for community leaders to explain their policies and actions and give older people a unique opportunity to question and discuss matters of concern. At the same time, we are seeking to encourage people to participate in a wider range of social and cultural activities in the belief that self-imposed isolation may well lead to depression and despair.

We are now seeking to break the log-jam on the poor provision of public toilets because our research survey, completed by more than 550 people, revealed that this is a major deterrent to an improving quality of life.

We are now asking the business community to open their toilet facilities to the general public - without first insisting on a purchase - and we will be asking the Council to make a financial contribution to each participant in a new Community Toilet Scheme. This is meaningful partnership

working in practice to secure a Better Enfield - unlike the platitudes we're so often fed.

It was the Forum that pressed the Primary Care Trust to find the money to make digital hearing aids available at Chase Farm's audiology unit. It was the Forum that pressed the Leisure Centres

Trust to start a discount scheme for older people that has led to many hundreds of them joining exercise regimes to make them fitter and hopefully enjoy a longer life.

We can get things done - ask the Southgate Symphony Orchestra or the Elsing Monday OAP Club how we helped to save them - and we can do more - if we had more volunteers coming forward to undertake simple, spare-time jobs. Our AGM in April will be your chance to show support for what we are trying to do - so come on in, there's a welcome here for you!

*Monty Meth*

**Chair**

### Welcome to Warburtons.....

We are delighted to welcome the Brimsdown-based Warburtons Bakery as a sponsor of the Forum and so you will be seeing their name and their products at many future events and in this Newsletter. The purpose-built Brimsdown bakery, costing £30 million, was opened by the Duke of Edinburgh in October 2003 and it employs more than 250 local people. Another £12 million is now being invested in a second Enfield plant on an adjacent site to be opened early next year.

Warburtons, a family baker since 1876, ranks among the top five grocery brands with its products distributed to roughly 70% of the country. So watch out for them in your local supermarket and support those who support the Forum.

### and thanks to Fairview

Forum Committee member Elizabeth Henthorn showed splendid initiative in knocking on the door of Fairview New Homes Ltd and securing a £250 donation for our funds.

Based in Lancaster Road, Enfield, Fairview is in the top 100 UK construction companies specialising in building residential homes within and around the M25 area. So thank you Fairview - and thanks Elizabeth.

## Forthcoming FORUM Meetings

**Tuesday 28 March 10am for 10.30 start**

**Mark Caress**, departmental manager Waitrose (Enfield):  
Warburtons Bakery discusses  
**Healthy Winter Foods - and Drinks**

**Tuesday 25 April 10am for 10.30 start**

**Annual General Meeting.**

Guest speaker: **Chief Superintendent Sharon Rowe**,  
Borough Police Commander,

**Tuesday 30 May 10am for 10.30 start**

**Mark Sanger**, LBE Community Safety Coordinator, and  
**Alan Gardner**, CCTV unit manager  
**CCTV: Making our Streets Safer**

**All of these meetings will be held at the  
Civic Centre, Silver Street**

## Take equity release advice

We know that releasing money from the asset value of our homes is now big business. Last year, £1.2 billion was raised in this way making a total of £5.3 billion borrowed as more people raise money against the value of their homes. Because these loans do not have to be paid back during our lifetime it is most important that you fully understand the implications of the many different equity release schemes now going the rounds before you commit yourself to anything.

The increased value of our homes coupled with declining pension income has produced an upsurge from cash-poor but asset-rich homeowners keen to raise money against their property. But there are pitfalls like taking out a lifetime mortgage which gives you cash without making any monthly payments. Interest is added to the amount borrowed which is repaid when the house is sold. But what if house prices fall and the family inheritance is eroded? The loan cost is going up all the time and while you may have a "no negative equity guarantee" it may not be the best option.

**Age Concern** has a free guide - **Using your home to improve your finances** - which you can get by calling **0800 169 5276**.

## Beware Email Scams

This unsolicited e-mail was received by a Forum member.

Dear Homeowner,

You have been favoured to re-finance your current home loan with a rate as low as 3.25%.

To take Advantage of this Limited Time opportunity all we ask is that you visit our Website and complete the 1 minute post Approval Form.

<<http://www.anotherscam.com>>

**Always delete unsolicited emails without opening them.**

## Calling all badminton, bowls & TT stalwarts

### Badminton players wanted

for a friendly non-league club

Tuesday evenings at the Drill Hall in Enfield.

8pm - 10.30pm.

Details call **020 8804 5909** or **01707 642728**

## Bowling Opportunities

### Enfield Bowling Club

*Enjoy the fresh air, exercise and a great social life* at **ENFIELD BOWLING CLUB, TOWN PARK**, Cecil Road in Enfield Town.

The club have a full social calendar and pride ourselves on our friendliness.

You'll find us adjacent to the cafe in the park and we have our own car park.

Call in to our COFFEE MORNING

SAT. APRIL 22ND from 10a.m. or during the afternoon drive.

Both occasions will offer a chance to try bowling or just look around.

**INTERESTED? Ring Barbara Aves - 020 8292 9510 for more information.**

### Bury Lodge Bowls Club

This is a very friendly club with a good social side. The club is looking for new members and would welcome anybody who is interested in giving bowls a try, without any obligation. It's a great game where you could make many friends.

So why not give it a try? One of our coaches will be more than happy to arrange for you to have a trial game when the season opens this April. The club is located in Bury Lodge Gardens, Bury Street West, Edmonton, N9 (Sited behind Salisbury House)

**If you are interested you can phone David Snell on 020 8360 6178 or Peter Frost on 020 8363 3099**

**All you need to get started is a pair of flat heeled shoes. Bowls can be borrowed and instruction is available.**

## ELLENBOROUGH Table Tennis Club

has special sessions for over 50s

on Monday 10am-12 noon

and Thursday 1.30pm-3.30pm

The club is based at Kimberley Gardens

a short walk from Enfield Town station,

Open to non-members at £2 per session.

Details from Sylvia Tyler tel: 01673 843655

## Fight for fair Council Tax - MAKE 31 MARCH PRESCOTT DAY

The Forum Committee has decided to support a new IsitFair campaign initiative aimed at speeding a change in the present system of collecting Council tax to one based on the ability to pay. We believe it should be people - not the properties we live in - that determines the amount we pay in council tax!

Campaign supporters throughout the country are being asked to take a photocopy of their council tax bill when it arrives. Then write a comment of your choice across the photocopied bill. You could, for example, write "This increase is more than double the rate of inflation" or you could relate it to the increase in your state pension by writing "This takes X% (whatever it is) of my basic state pension". Choose something which represents your own views but IsitFair urges you to make comments without using bad or abusive language - and we endorse that plea.

Then you are asked to send the photocopy - not the original bill to: **Rt Hon. John Prescott MP, Deputy Prime Minister, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU.**

We are all urged to post the duplicate council tax bill on the same day - Thurs-

day 30 March by first class post so that letters from all parts of the country land on Mr Prescott's desk on 31 March.

We know it is too late to influence the 2006-7 council tax increase but the campaign will serve two purposes. Firstly, it will remind Mr Prescott of the support there is for a fairer council tax system and the urgent need for the Lyons Committee to complete its inquiry and report its findings.

Secondly, it will remind him and his fellow Cabinet Ministers that the £2.20 weekly increase in the basic state pension to £84.25 for a single person from April and the £3.55 rise to £134.75 for couples will be more than largely eaten up by the council tax increase when taken with the recent massive fuel price rises with a further 22% hike in gas and electricity prices in the pipeline - even with the £200 winter fuel allowance.

The winter fuel allowance - it is £300 for a household with somebody aged 80 and over - will be paid each year until the next General Election. But last year's £200 grant to help us pay council tax is said to be a one-off -

unless Gordon Brown springs a surprise rabbit out of his Budget Day hat on 22 March!

Enfield's council tax is going up 4.74% of which 2.49% goes to the local authority and the rest to the GLA to pay for among other things the extra costs of policing, fire services, transport and the Olympic Games. On a Band D house this works out that Enfield Council will get £998.55 and the GLA £288.61 - a total of £1,287.16 compared with last year's £1,228.87 - an increase of £58.29.

The GLA budget is up 13.3 % partly to pay for putting neighbourhood police teams in every ward in the Borough by April - two years earlier than the April 2008 deadline and more police on the rail network. It will also go towards the £550 million Londoners will pay for the 2012 Olympics over the next 10 years - opposed by the Forum from the outset because it was introduced without consultation with people living on fixed incomes.

**Remember to photocopy your council tax bill and post it to John Prescott on Thursday 30 March.**

### Don't pay more tax

We're all entitled to have an income of at least £94 a week before tax has to be paid. If your income is below that limit, and you've got some money in a bank or building society, they will be deducting tax on your interest when they shouldn't.

You could be getting your interest without tax deducted by filling in form R85 and if you need a form or help then please phone the helpline 0845 980 0645.

The £94 weekly limit applies to people aged under 65; for those aged 65 -74 the limit before tax is £136 and over 75 it is £138. And everyone around that income bracket should be talking to the Pensions Service to see if they also also eligible for the guaranteed minimum pension or the savings credit by calling freephone 0800 99 1234.

### 25p at 80 is "an irritant"

Nigel Waterson MP, the Conservative Party's Shadow Pensions Minister, has told the Forum that we "make an excellent point" in campaigning against the miserly 25p extra for pensioners on reaching the age of 80, which has remained unchanged since it was introduced in 1971.

In a letter to the Forum, Mr Waterson says he knows this "causes an irritation to many pensioners. It is certainly the case that older pensioners on average tend to be poorer and in need of greatest help".

However, Mr Waterson says his party is "engaged in a thorough-going review of all our policies at present, and it would be wrong to seek to commit my party to any specific policy promise at the moment. I shall certainly bear your comments in mind, and I wish the Enfield Borough Forum all the best for the future" he adds.

We had asked Mr Waterson to offer the Government parliamentary support to update and upgrade the age addition to make it more meaningful, since it was claimed by Ministers that ending the risible 25p would require a new Bill to be put before Parliament. And this would be subject to normal Parliamentary scrutiny and debate.

Mr Stephen Timms, the Pensions Minister, admitted in a letter to the Forum that the 25p is "something of an anachronism" and he told us that to replace it would require a free standing Bill to be tabled by the Government and this would be at the expense of other legislation.

We think there is a better chance of getting a change to the present age addition legislation than there is for some other parts of the pensioners' agenda and so we've now asked the National Pensioners Convention to make this one of the priority issues when seeking to influence the Government's new White Paper on pensions to be published shortly.

## Shop Names to make you smile

There's a baker's shop in Sutton called **Agatha Christie**  
 A mobile snack caravan on Dartmoor called **The Hound of the Basket Meals**  
 A fish shop in Mallorca called **Oh My Cod**  
 A barber's in Liverpool called **Herr Kutz**  
 A fruit, veg and flower shop in Norfolk called **Meloncaulie Rose**  
 A dry cleaner at Turnham Green called **Turn 'em Clean**  
 A bike shop in Dublin called **Cycle-logical**  
**But Guy Swillingham has the last word with this selection from his book Shop Horror: The Best of the Worst in British Shop Names.**

**The Vynl Resting Place** selling second-hand records in Croydon  
**Thistle Do Nicely** selling novelties in Edinburgh  
**Thai Tanic** restaurant in Belfast  
**Sherlock Homes**, estate agent, Manchester  
**Knead the Dough**, bakers in Carmarthenshire  
**It's Curtains For You**, curtain maker, Liverpool  
**Sherwood Florist**, Sheffield  
**BatterSea Cod's Home**, fish and chip shop in Sheffield  
**Norman D. Landing**, military gear, Winton, Dorset

**For full details about the Forum see our website**

*www.enfieldover50sforum.org.uk*

## A Women's Self Defense Course

**has been arranged for 8th April 2006**

At Community House, Fore Street

10am to 4pm

The course covers topics to help you avoid becoming a victim, awareness, fear control, body language/conflict management, the law & self defence. etc.,.

Contact Forum Member

Maria Tolly tel: 020 8292 3237

# .....Random Round-Up.....

### We're winning!

In the 1960s, fewer than 300 people in Britain had reached the age of 100. In 2004 there were more than 6,000 centenarians. By 2036, it is forecast there will be more than 40,000 - and there will be 1.2 million 100 year-olds and over by 2074, so thinks the Government's Actuaries Department.

The "agequake" is rumbling across every country in the developed world bringing with it increased demands on health and social services, changes in employment patterns and a big rethink on the provision of pensions. The optimistic life expectancy forecast carries a warning: an epidemic like birdflu or an obesity pandemic could ruin it!

### On your guard

Plug-in air fresheners in the bathroom or anywhere in the house have been identified as a major cause of fires. This is because the plastic they are made from is thin plastic. The danger comes particularly from plug-ins that have a small night light which is left on but can make the unit too hot.

### Smoke signals

More than 8.5 million adults do not have a smoke alarm in their home to alert them if a fire breaks out. And even if they do have equipment to tackle a small fire, many lack the basic fire safety knowledge. Many would risk serious injury by dousing an electrical fire with water when what they should do is pull the plug out or switch off the power at the fuse box before fighting the flames with a non-water based extinguisher.

The Over 50s Forum campaigns to ensure that every older person is living in a home fitted with a smoke alarm. It will be supplied free of charge with a 10-year battery and help may be obtained to fit them. Just ring 020 8803 9316

### Safety checks

On gas and electrical installations in your home are now being carried out by Age Concern Enfield. A written report on the condition of your electrics will cost £15. A full boiler service by a Corgi-registered heating / plumbing engineer

will cost £50. Age Concern also offers a decorating service with a 10% discount on work carried out before the end of March and there is a range of handyman services also available. Call Miriam Dubery 020 8351 1322.

### TOFF - Trips for Older Females and Fellows

This is a non-profit voluntary group running holidays this year to the European Parliament from May 30 -June 2; Edinburgh Festival 15-18 August and Cuba 15-29 November. Further details from Carlie Newman, former director of the Greater London Forum 020 7586 6440.

### Hearing check by phone

Are you one of the four million people said to avoid a hearing test because you are too embarrassed to have a hearing aid? The RNID are now offering hearing checks over the phone and assure people that hearing aids are now more discreet than ever. Call 0845 600 5555 for the test taking about five minutes.

# We're beginning to move on toilets

Our campaign to make Enfield a better place to live by improving access to public toilets has moved a good way forward following the launch of our successful survey. The initial reluctance of the Health Scrutiny Panel to get involved has now led to them inviting the Forum to attend their next meeting on Thursday 23 March, 7pm at the Civic Centre.

Following a GLA conference on the poor toilet provision in London, Forum chairman Monty Meth went to Richmond for a personal briefing by the local Council on their "Community Toilet Scheme" which has some 70 shops, restaurants, garages, supermarkets and pubs opening their toilets to the public, without having to first make a purchase, and in return they get an annual Council grant towards the upkeep.

We've now spoken with the Enfield Business and Retailers Association (EBRA) and asked them to approach their members in all the Borough's shopping centres - Edmonton Green, Enfield Highway, Ponders End, Enfield Town, Oakwood, Cockfosters, Southgate, Winchmore Hill and Palmers Green - to see what support there is for a similar scheme in Enfield.

If we can show there's sufficient interest EBRA will, we hope, join us in asking the Council to set up a similar scheme here in Enfield. It would mean the outlet signing a contract allowing the public to use their safe and accessible customer toilet and in return the Council would pay them say £500 a year to cover their extra costs.

If we could get 50 premises in the Borough offering toilet facilities it would cost the Council £25,000 a year compared with over £100,000 for a single automatic public convenience and which costs £15,000 a year to maintain.

The Council would provide stickers to be displayed by the supporting retailers saying they are members of the community toilet scheme and indicating they have male and female facilities and whether it is disability accessible. There is accompanying street signage saying "toilets are available where you see this sign".

The Richmond experience shows that 50% of people using the toilets come back to support the business and that providing more toilets in shopping areas is an integral part of an improving street scene, which is one of the Council's priorities.

Can the scheme work in Enfield? We put it to the test at Charlie's Italian Restaurant in Colman Parade, Southbury Road, which actually has a sign in the window saying toilets are NOT for use by the public. But he expressed interest in joining a Community Toilet Scheme if it was financially supported by the Council.

Forum members can help by approaching suitable premises to see if the management is interested in discussing the scheme. Let us have the contact name and telephone number and we'll do the rest.

**Phone Monty Meth 020 8882 1303.**

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## Whitewebbs: "Something will be done"

The Forum has been banging on about the disgraceful condition of the cafe and toilets at Whitewebbs Park for well over a year. We were told to await the discussions on a new business plan encompassing the golf club and all the surrounding area. So we waited and waited only to now find that the business plan - if there ever was one - was stillborn and nobody can even find the corpse.

That's the bad news. The good news is that there has been a major shake-up in the Council's management of the Borough's parks and Mike Hainge has been appointed assistant director street scene, waste and parks reporting to John Pryor, director, environment, street scene and parks. Mr Hainge has two additional acting managers responsible for administration and operations and we have been assured that the Council is now looking critically at the facilities in all the parks.

Indeed, Mr Pryor told the Forum quite explicitly that "**something will be done**" about the cafe and toilets at Whitewebbs as a priority and the restaurant franchises at all the parks will be reviewed.

We estimate that it will cost several hundred thousand pounds to rebuild the cafe and toilets at Whitewebbs and create the attractive leisure area that the site warrants. We think it is a pity that no capital sum was earmarked for

Whitewebbs in the budget for the coming financial year, but we expect key decisions to be taken by the summer.

Meanwhile, we understand that Mr Hainge has personally visited the Whitewebbs premises and required certain interim improvements. We do appreciate that there are some legal matters to sort out regarding the lease of the cafe site but we think that a combination of goodwill and urgency can bring to an end what Forum member Jean Calvert describes as a "**disgrace to the Borough**".

Jean writes: "There is a large and regular clientele, walkers, riders, dog owners, runners, golfers and groups of police on meal breaks. People of all ages use the cafe, but many, particularly during the week, are older folk. What better than to be able to stop for a rest and something warm to eat or drink in the bitter weather which we have had. I need not tell you what a disgrace the toilet facilities are. I understand the council no longer cleans them. That fact alone will deter many older people from going there to exercise.

**"Whitewebbs is beautiful and an asset to the Borough. What does it say about our standards to allow this slum to remain neglected for so long?"**

We've been told that **something will be done** and we must now see that it is.

## Figures & Facts

You've heard people talk about and you've read about social exclusion. And now there's even going to be a Minister for dealing with it. Well, this is what it really means to older people.

- 35% are without a phone**
- 30% have no children living**
- 23% are in poor physical health**
- 21% have no private transport**
- 19% are aged 80 and over**
- 17% are depressed**
- 16% live alone**
- 15% are on a low income.**

These facts and figures came from A Sure Start to Life issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, January 2006.

## Warm home grants

Over 100,000 people a year are now getting Government help to make their homes warmer and we want to make sure that everyone who needs a grant - and is entitled to it - applies for one. The grants are available to people on certain benefits and own their own home or rent one from a private landlord. Council tenants can apply to the local authority.

You can claim if you are 60 and over and are receiving pension credit, income support, council tax discount, housing benefit or job-seekers allowance. The grants of up to £2,700 are made under a government-funded Warm Front scheme to make homes warmer, healthier and more energy efficient. Grants to those eligible are given for loft insulation, cavity wall insulation, hot water tank insulation and draught-proofing.

**If you are not sure whether you are entitled to a warm front grant call 0800 072 9006. If you want to find out more about the scheme call 0800 316 2814. Calls are free to both lines.**

## Volunteers Wanted

to support a professional community opera performance of Hansel and Gretel. see [www.pondersend.org.uk](http://www.pondersend.org.uk)  
Contact : Matt Lane 020 8245 4584

# Heard in Court

Extracts from a book called Disorder in the Courts of things people actually said in court, word for word, taken down and published by court reporters who heard these exchanges actually taking place:

What is your date of birth?

WITNESS: July 18th.

What year?

WITNESS: **Every year.**

Were you present when your picture was taken?

WITNESS: **Would you repeat the question?**

How old is your son, the one living with you?

WITNESS: Thirty-eight or thirty-five, I can't remember which.

How long has he lived with you?

WITNESS: **Forty-five years.**

What was the first thing your husband said to you that morning?

WITNESS: He said, "Where am I, Cathy?"

And why did that upset you?

WITNESS: **My name is Susan.**

This myasthenia gravis, does it affect your memory at all?

WITNESS: Yes.

And in what ways does it affect your memory?

WITNESS: I forget.

**You forget? Can you give us an example of something you forgot?**

Now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?

WITNESS: **Did you actually pass the bar exam?**

So the date of conception (of the baby) was August 8th?

WITNESS: Yes.

And what were you doing at that time?

WITNESS: **Uh....**

How was your first marriage terminated?

WITNESS: By death.

**And by whose death was it terminated?**

Can you describe the individual?

WITNESS: He was about medium height and had a beard.

**Was this a male or a female?**

ALL your responses MUST be oral, OK?

What school did you go to?

WITNESS: **Oral.**

## Pensions debate: now have your say

Because the recent Turner Commission Report on pensions made no recommendation of immediate benefit to today's pensioners, there is a stronger than ever case for letting the Government know that the 11 million people now receiving the state retirement pension cannot be ignored in discussing future pensions policy.

Ministers say they want to hear our views before giving their response to Turner and they invite people to submit their views via the internet through [www.dwp.gov.uk/debate](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/debate). We hope many will do so bearing in mind our long-standing campaign to update the niggardly 25p extra at age 80 and the policy of the National Pensioners Convention (NPC), the representative body of some 2 million pensioners, which includes our Forum.

The NPC is pressing the Government to:

- \* **Raise the basic state pension to at least £114.05 a week**
- \* **Restore the link with average male earnings**
- \* **Pay the state pension now to all pensioners, particularly women - 87% of whom do not get the full state pension because they lack 39 years national insurance contributions.**

Unless Government policy changes, pensioners can only look forward to an extra £1.36 a week more in 2010 than they would get under the present system. This is because the Turner Commission only suggested restoring the link between pensions and earnings in 2010, without first raising the state pension.



# .....Olivia's Page.....

## **KEEP SWITCHED ON!**

This was the key phrase repeated at the self defence and personal safety day held on February 18 at Community House. Thanks to sponsorship from the police and an invitation from the Enfield Women's Safety Forum, a mixed group of our members spent the day learning strategies and skills to help us keep safe both on the streets, in our cars and homes.

Instructors Liz and Micky Clark tackled serious issues like mugging, rape, knife and gun threats, with humour that helped build confidence in the participants. We learnt to walk confidently, protect our personal space and avoid being distracted by questions from potential muggers and much much more.

One of the most practical tips is that we should all carry a dummy wallet / purse containing some old papers and foreign coins. In the event of a robber demanding your purse, take out the dummy one and throw it some distance away from both of you. This will give you valuable time to escape and you will keep your real purse!!

**For further information on these excellent training days, please contact Bron Lovelock at Enfield Women's Safety Forum on 0208 379 4310 or Liz Clark, Safety Consultant on 07967 243 667**

## **Lifelong Learning**

We've had 43 returns from members regarding their lifelong learning preferences and experiences. Members are urged to take a few minutes to complete the form and return it to Olivia before 30th March. The results will be collated and the most popular requests will be put forward to LBE lifelong learning manager Dr Ben Charles to see if the sessions and topics can be made available to meet demand.

## **Walks**

Volunteer walk leaders are needed to sustain and improve on the walks for health in Enfield's parks. A one day fun training course is free of charge and any interested members should contact Christina Lee on [Christina.lee@enfield.gov.uk](mailto:Christina.lee@enfield.gov.uk) or on 0208 449 2459.

## **Millfield is booming**

There are some excellent productions/talks/musical evenings taking place at Millfield Theatre over the coming

weeks. For your own copy of their quarterly information booklet, call the box office on 0208 807 6680 or drop a line to Millfield Arts Centre Silver Street London N18 1PJ. Ask to be put on the mailing list and remember that for productions that offer concessions, those members between 50-60 will get a concessionary priced ticket if you say you are a Forum member!

## **Remember dig for victory?**

Spring is around the corner and as we have several allotment plots still up for grabs. Why not come along to the Forum allotment meet up on Saturday April 1st at 11am to have a look at the wonderful opportunity to grow flowers / fruit and veg in good company at a mere cost of £4 per year. Contact Olivia on 0208 447 8841 for directions to the allotment.

## **Watch it!**

Keep your eyes open for the next newsletter which will have booking details for the Forum Mystery day trip which will take place in August. The only clues to be given are pretty, quaint, educational, historical! That's all.

*Olivia Goodfellow*

# Thoughts on Getting Old

Know how to prevent sagging? **Just eat till the wrinkles fill out**

I've had two by-pass operations, a hip replacement, new knees, fought prostate cancer and diabetes, I'm half blind, can't hear very well, take a dozen different medicines, have bouts of dementia, can't remember if I'm 85 or 92. **But thank God, I still have my driving licence.**

A man, (mid nineties) very well dressed, hair well groomed, great looking suit, flower in his lapel smelling slightly of a good after shave, presenting a well looked-after image, walks into an upmarket cocktail bar. Seated at the bar is an elderly looking lady, (mid eighties). The man walks over, sits alongside her, orders a drink, takes a sip, turns to her and says, **So tell me, do I come here often?**

An elderly man had serious hearing problems for years. He went to the doctor who was able to fit him with a set of hearing aids

The man went back in a month to the doctor who said: *"Your hearing is perfect. Your family must be really pleased you can hear again."*

The man replied, **"Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to the conversations. I've changed my will three times!"**

Two elderly men from a retirement home were sitting on a bench when one turns to the other and says: *"Slim, I'm 83 years old now and I'm just full of aches and pains. I know you're about my age. How do you feel?"*

Slim says, *"I feel just like a new-born baby."*

*Really!? Like a new-born baby!?"*

*Yep. No hair, no teeth, and I think I just wet my pants.*

An elderly couple had dinner at another couple's house, and after eating, the wives left the table and went into the kitchen. The two men were talking, and one said, *"Last night we went out to a new restaurant and it was really great. I would recommend it very highly. The other man said, "What's the name of the restaurant?"*

The first man thought and thought and finally said, *"What's the name of that flower you give to someone you love? You know.. the one that's red and has thorns."*

*"Do you mean a rose?"*

*"Yes, that's the one". He turned towards the kitchen and yelled, "Rose, what's the name of that restaurant we went to last night?"*

# Forthcoming Social Events

**Sunday April 2 at 7.30pm**

## Southgate Symphony Orchestra

Church Hall, The Green, Waterfall Road, Southgate

playing Rossini, Tchaikovsky, Haydn and Schubert

with **James Hickie, solo oboe**

**advance tickets £5 concession to Forum members**

Available at the March Forum meeting

or send cheque & sae to 12, The Glen, Enfield EN2 7BZ

**Wednesday 27 April 2006 at 7-30pm**

## The Compton Players

present

**Visiting Hours by Richard Harris**

A Preview Night for Over 50s Forum Members

All tickets priced at £5-00

Five One-Act Plays peering behind the scenes of hospital life during the visiting hour. The plays convey the thoughts of patients and visitors with an injection of worldly wisdom and a large dose of humour.

**The United Reform Church**

**Compton Road, Winchmore Hill**

Access by W9 bus or from Winchmore Hill Train Station.

**Tickets from Roy Barrows 020 8360 8561**

(only 48 seats available)

## Suffolk Coastal Day Trip

**Thursday 15 June**

Within three days of announcing this trip to Aldeburgh, lunch at Westleton and then on to Southwold, our first coach going on June 8 was full. We couldn't book a second coach for the same day because the restaurant could not accommodate that number of people. So we booked a second coach for the following week and at the time of writing we have very few places left for Forum members. The price of the trip including a three course lunch is £21.

First come, first served for the remaining very few places. Cheques please to Enfield Borough Over 50s Forum. Contact Olivia on 020 8 447 8841.

## Rhine House Party Holiday

**Departs Friday 24 November. Returns Monday 27 November**

A Crusader operated holiday to Bad Salzig in the Loreley Valley, the most beautiful part of the Rhine. Half-board with free evening drinks.

Cost £169 pp - £50 deposit secures your place. Cheques please to Enfield Borough Over 50s Forum

There are still some places for this pre-Christmas visit to the stunning Rhine Valley. Visit the Christmas markets, go on the excursions and do all your shopping in one go.

**Further information contact Olivia on 0208 447 8841.**

Make sure you have travel insurance and the European health card.

## Sunset Walks in Grovelands Park

**Commence on Monday 17 April**

We meet at the café in Grovelands and will walk from 6.30pm-7.30pm same time. same day, every week until September. All abilities are welcome and all ages! An optional weekly charge of 20p enables walkers to take part in the weekly prize draw. An up to date leaflet of all the walks in our borough's beautiful parks will be available at the next Forum meeting.

## Two activity taster half days

Are planned after Easter at Albany and Southgate leisure centres. Details will follow but the aim is to attract those older people in the Borough who would not normally go to a leisure centre as part of their weekly activities. Pilates, Tai Chi, chair based exercises, water confidence, introduction to gym equipment and fun games will be available at both centres. Sensitive tutors will be on hand to enable even the most unfit and unmotivated to realise the benefits of exercise and activity for over 50s.

## An Obesity Awareness Day

Will take place during the week beginning 17 April while schoolchildren are still on holidays and to make this a family experience. Details will follow as this is still in the planning stage. The aim of the day is to raise awareness across the generations of the health risks associated with being overweight and the ways in which families can collectively work together to make a difference to their food intake and exercise habits.

## "Magical Mystery Tour"

The first to be held by the Forum will be taking place on Saturday 12 August. This is a very difficult concept to market as the whole point is that no-one knows where we will be going apart from the organiser! However, the trip will appeal to all ages, is within a couple of hours from Enfield and will be of interest to men and women. Booking slips will be sent out with the next newsletter. There will only be one coach and therefore places are limited to 51.

**Published by Enfield Borough Over 50s Forum.**

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# There's no fun in falling People Power Wins

Two Forum members, Ron Phippin and Stan Sparrey, have recently had bad falls on faulty and dangerous pavement slabs in the Borough. Ron grazed his upper right arm and hurt his knee while Stan hurt his face, arm and knee requiring X-rays and visits to the GP and hospital.

We've constantly put out a full-scale red alert warning about the danger of trips and falls because we know that falling is the most common cause of accidental death among older people, with one person dying every five hours following a fall in the home. So we ask you to look again at the Home Safety Audit written by Forum committee member Derek Friggens and produced by the Primary Care Trust as part of our Falls Awareness Campaign because falls cause an estimated 36,000 injuries each year. Just shout if you haven't seen a copy and we'll get it to you.

Ron and Stan are but two of the most recent claims for compensation after falling in the street - adding to the 850 made by injured people in the last five years and causing the Council to pay out over £1 million in compensation. Ron is particularly angry as about 10 days before the accident he warned the council of this danger. After the accident, he phoned his local councillor immediately who phoned the relevant council department and the next day the offending slabs were repaired.

He then decided to sue for damages and wrote to the insurers claiming a modest £395 which he planned to give to a charity, the Nightingale Trust. There was a long delay as the insurers were waiting for a report from the Council's Highways Dept.

Ron says he was gobsmacked and alarmed at the letter he finally received on Monday 30 January, five months after his fall, when Pauline Howes, the Claims Administrator at Zurich Municipal Insurance refused his claim on the

following grounds:

"A Highway Authority will have statutory defence to a claim if it can prove that any defect did not exist through any fault of its part at the date of the accident. The question of fault will be determined by whether or not the Authority have in place a reasonable system of inspection and repair. What constitutes a reasonable frequency of inspections varies according to the particular character of the highway concerned and the amount of traffic (both vehicle and pedestrian) using it.

"In this case the highway concerned is inspected at intervals of 6 months. At the date of the last inspection prior to this accident no defect was recorded at the place concerned. The defect seems therefore to have developed subsequent to that inspection. Therefore at the date of the accident the Highway Authority were unaware of the existence of the relevant defect.

*"In our opinion, the Council's inspection system is a reasonable one, and as a result, the accident cannot be said to have occurred due to any fault on the Council's part. Therefore we are unable to meet the claim".*

That's a fine drop of whitewash if ever we saw it and Ron and Stan are still pursuing their cases. Meanwhile, we urge everyone to keep safe and sound by following these five steps to safety:

**Exercise** - to keep your muscles strong and improve balance

**Lighting** - make sure your home is well lit, particularly if you get up at night

**Eyesight** - have a free over 60s check-up every two years

**Footwear** - beware of slippers that don't grip the floor. Wearing socks on their own is not a good idea

**Medication** - check immediately with your doctor if you feel dizzy and check from time to time that all the pills are necessary.

Bus route 377 from Ponders End to Oakwood has been saved thanks to protests from the Forum and many other organisations and petitioners led by one of our affiliates, the Bush Hill Park Residents' Association.

London Buses informed the Forum that Arriva had won the contract with no change in the route or frequency. "This means it is no longer proposed to restructure the route and the 377 would continue to serve Bush Hill Park and Oakwood Station....Retaining the links reflects the comments made in response to consultation from stakeholders and users".

So the 377 will continue to serve the Lonsdale Drive area and the expanding Highlands School which would otherwise be relatively remote from the bus network, says Stephen Walker, the London Buses service change advocate.

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## Everyone Needs an EHIC

What's an EHIC ? EHIC stands for European Health Insurance Card. It replaces the old E111 form and you need it when you go to any of the 25 EU countries and Iceland, Norway, Switzerland or Liechtenstein because it entitles you to reduced or no cost medical treatment should you need it. It is not a substitute for travel insurance, so Forum members going on the Rhine trip in November, for example, must have it because it will give them access to state-provided medical treatment - but it will not cover things such as transport home.

**You can apply for an EHIC card at [www.ehic.org.uk](http://www.ehic.org.uk). or over the phone on 0845 606 2030 (you'll need to give your NHS or national insurance number) or you can pick up a form at the post office.**

# Edmonton Forum

**The next meeting will be on Friday 28 April starting at 10.30am in the meeting room at Edmonton Green Leisure Centre. Speaker to be confirmed.**

**Refreshments available during the meeting.**

## Handy Reference Directory

- Age Concern (written information) **0800 00 99 66**
- Breast Cancer Care **020 7384 2984**
- Carers and people with disabilities confidential enquiry line - **0800 88 22 00**
- Claim Pension Credit **0800 99 1234**
- Counsel and Care advice line Mon - Fri 10 -1pm (care for people over 60) **0845 300 7585**
- Diabetes UK **0845 120 2960**
- Disability and Carers benefit enquiry line **0800 882200**
- Free confidential welfare rights advice **0808 800 7575**
- Free Home Security for people over 60 with savings below £16,000 **020 8379 4310**
- Free Passports for those born before Sept 3 1929 **0870 521 0410**
- Home Support Network **020 8351 1322**
- Macmillan Cancer Relief **0808 808**
- NHS Direct **0845 4647**
- NHS Smoking Helpline - for anyone wanting to stop **0800 169 0 169**
- Retirement Pension Forecast **0845 3000 168**
- SeniorLink 24-hour response line helping older people to live independently at home **01255 473999**
- Stop junk mail write Mail Preference Service, Freepost LON20771 London W1E 0ZT
- Stop junk phone calls **0845 0700707**
- Taxback on savings for people with low incomes **0845 077 6543**
- TaxHelp for older people - over 60 on low incomes **0845 601 3321**
- TV licences enquiry line (free for over 75s) **08456 036 999**
- Warm Front grants for over 60s receiving income-related help Freephone **0800 952 0600**
- Winter Fuel helpline **08459 15 15 15**

**PLEASE CUT OUT & SAVE**

## You couldn't make it up!

"The Home Office has lost control of its finances and its accounts are in a mess", according to a report published by the public spending watchdog. The National Audit Office is so alarmed at what it has uncovered that it has refused to give its approval to the department's flawed financial records. The Permanent Secretary at the time the trouble developed was Sir John Gieve. He left the Home Office in December to join the Bank of England as Deputy Governor in charge of **FINANCIAL STABILITY!!**

*The Times 1 February 2006*

## Could you offer a home to an older cat?

Local cats charity, Cheshunt and Waltham Cross Cats Protection, which covers Edmonton in London to Welwyn Garden City, currently has some older cats in their care that would particularly suit retired people. Rose-Marie, the Homechecker for the charity, who rescue unwanted cats and kittens said: **"We always find it harder to home older cats, especially those that are black as many people want kittens and colourful cats, and its such a shame as we have loving older cats who would make a wonderful pet."**

Take Ellie for example, she is a loving black cat, and needs a home without any other cats. Or what about Polly? She is a special cat as she has an extra toe on each paw but has a beautiful personality. The charity can also help with expenses and medical bills which may arise when homing one of their cats. So why not find out more? If you are on the internet visit the webpage at **www.cheshuntcats.org.uk** or telephone Rose-Marie who will be delighted to talk to you about any of her lovely cats.

**Rose-Marie is on 0870 609 1241.**

## Police Stations opening longer

Three of our local police stations are now open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They are at Edmonton, Southgate and Enfield Town. Ponders End station is open from 10am to 6pm, Monday to Friday and Winchmore Hill station is open from 10am-2pm Monday to Friday.

All the stations can be contacted by telephone via 020 8807 1212

### The police station locations are:

- Edmonton: 462 Fore Street  
 Enfield: 41 Baker Street  
 Southgate: 25 Chase Side  
 Winchmore Hill: 687 Green Lanes  
 Ponders End: 202-214 High Street

### Safer Neighbourhood teams can be contacted as follows:

- Edmonton Green - 020 8649 3554  
 Enfield Highway - 020 8721 2903  
 Enfield Town - 020 8721 2791  
 Lower Edmonton - 020 8649 3553  
 Palmers Green - 020 8721 2835  
 Southbury - 020 8721 2763  
 Southgate - 020 8721 2792  
 Upper Edmonton - 020 8649 3552

**These numbers are for low-level crime issues only. In an emergency you are advised to call 999 as normal.**

## Overheard at the Forum.....

I felt like my body had got totally out of shape, so I got my doctor's permission to join the Southbury Leisure Centre and start exercising.

I decided to take the aerobics class arranged for the Over 50s and I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down and perspired for an hour. But, by the time I got my leotard on, the class was over.

## It's Freedom to Travel Time

All Freedom Pass holders are reminded to renew their passes - which are paid for by Enfield Council and the other London boroughs - by 31 March. Passes are being renewed in alphabetical order using the first letter of your surname and if you missed your week you can apply after 27 March. To apply for a new pass or renew your existing one - which gives free travel until March 31 2008 - you must first pick up an application form from the post office. Then you'll need to provide proof of your name and age and proof of your address.

Disabled people are allowed 24-hour free access to London's tube, and bus services and on local rail services after 9.30am. People aged 60 and over can travel free on tube and bus services after 9am and on local rail services after 9.30am. At the weekends, there are no time restrictions.

## Home security is free

More than 300 Enfield households a year are taking advantage of a free home security scheme which has been running for ten years - but all too few people know about it.

If you are aged 60 and over and have less than £16,000 in savings - or you are receiving income support, housing and council tax benefit, pension or family credit - then Enfield's campaign for a safer community can help you.

They will provide free home security - locks, bolts, door chains and smoke alarms. A police crime prevention officer will survey your home and estimate the security work needed and then arrange for the work to be done. The scheme applies to anyone living in a council house or flat, sheltered accommodation, private property whether owned or rented.

**If you want to apply just contact the Enfield Community Safety Unit on 020 8379 4310.**

## Compost bins from just £6

It's good news for regular home composters or anyone thinking of joining this growing movement as a new range of compost bins becomes available from Enfield Council.

At only £6 for a small (330 litre) bin that normally sells for around £50 and just £15 for a larger model (600 litre) normally selling for around £70, all vegetable matter can easily be recycled to help make any garden flourish.

Enfield Council is working in partnership with WRAP (the Waste & Resources Action Programme) to supply compost bins to residents at this special rate.

**Details of all WRAP's activities are available at [www.wrap.org.uk](http://www.wrap.org.uk)**

**To order compost bins call 0845 077 0760**

## Take action to stop junk mail

Enfield Council is offering a one-stop solution to a top irritant - junk mail. Their new free WOWie Stop Junk Mail Action Pack contains 'return to sender' labels, a 'no leaflets, thank you' sticker for your letterbox and ready-printed forms to complete to escape mailing lists. There's also a leaflet explaining a five-point plan of action to prevent junk mail - it could be the last leaflet you ever receive!

Considering each household receives around 400 unsolicited letters and leaflets a year. Enfield's total ration would fill 76 domestic garages - an appalling waste of paper.

The action packs are available free on request from Enfield libraries. Or order one by calling **020 8379 1000** or e-mailing your postal address to: **waste.services@enfield.gov.uk**

**(please type 'Stop Junk Mail action pack' in the subject line).**



**On 31st January 2006 Mark McLaughlin, LBE Director of Finance & Corporate Services discussed the forthcoming LBE 2006/7 Budget for Enfield with Forum members**

