

Enfield Borough Over 50s Forum

The Annual Report

For the year ending 31st March 2015

Presented to the Forum's annual general meeting
held at the Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield
Tuesday 26th May 2015

Enfield Over 50s

“Don't talk about us, Without us”



Supported by



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 Chair, Greater London Forum for Older People

Vivien Giladi:
 Health Improvement Partnership Board
 Healthwatch Reference Group
 Health and Wellbeing Board

Monty Meth:
 Chair, Oakwood Medical Centre Patients Committee
 Barndoc Patients Advisory Group
 Primary Care Implementation Group

Joyce Pullen:
 Member Patients Participants Group
 Volunteer at Nightingale Hospice

Irene Richards:
 Enfield Older Peoples Board
 Enfield Safeguarding Adults Board
 Enfield Quality Checkers
 Chair, PPG Abernethy House; Dignity in Care Panel

Jeff Rodin
 Chair, Enfield Citizen's Advice Bureau
 Consultant, Tax Help for Older People
 Treasurer, Enfield Community Transport

Peter Smith:
 Enfield Over 50s Forum representative on the Enfield Transport Users Group.
 Enfield Over 50s Forum & ASLEF representative and Executive Member on the NPC London Region.
 Enfield Over 50s Forum representative on the Patient Representative Forum (PRF) and Public Led Assessment of Care Environment (PLACE) at the North Middlesex University Hospital.
 HAPIA Heathwatch Public involvement Association.

Tony Watts:
 Enfield Strategic Partnership Board
 Enfield Older Peoples Board (Vice Chair)
 Enfield Leisure & Culture Board
 AgeUK Enfield Board (and Supporting Independent Living Board -SILS)
 AgeUK National Policy Sounding Board
 North East Enfield Partnership Board

Christine Whetstone:
 Amnesty International Volunteer Speaker
 Enfield Integrated Care Board
 North East Enfield Partnership Board
 Enfield Skills for Work Service
 Community volunteer for the Enfield Youth Offending Service

Chair's Report

Things are starting to look up. Spring is busting out all over. The basic state pension seems likely to increase by more than the RPI rate of inflation. (Writing in March, when the RPI shows 1% inflation the probability of an above inflation increase seems very likely but things can change quickly.) Employment has reached record levels and the proportion in work has never been higher since current records began in 1971. In fact employment seems likely to be at its highest rate since the War. Unemployment is falling and there are lots of vacancies. That said, many people are in unattractive jobs: zero hours contracts must be a nightmare for some people who need regular income to get by. Wages are hardly keeping up with inflation. The return on savings is derisory, and after the election taxes will increase and or public spending will be cut. By the time this is published we will have a new Government. This will be inheriting a better outlook than was the case five years ago but there are many things that could go badly wrong. Ukraine springs to mind, the Middle East is still a mess and Greece does not seem to have resolved its debt crisis.

Perhaps the best thing that is happening may be devolution of control of the health and care budgets to local statutory bodies in Manchester. Devo Manc, as it has come to be called has been warmly welcomed by pretty well all commentators. For example, the well-respected independent think tank, The Kings Fund wrote: **Last week's announcement of plans to devolve responsibility for health and social care to statutory organisations in Greater Manchester is a bold initiative that could bring substantial benefits if implemented well.**

At a recent Age UK Conference on older people and health the Chair of a London CCG, a practicing doctor, claimed that the current system was in chaos, lacked responsibility and suffered from an appalling lack of communication. Broadly similar comments have been made by Vivien Giladi and other members of our health team when commenting on local arrangements. There have been numerous top down attempts to get things more closely integrated: frequent exhortations and do you remember the Department of Health and Social Security? These have been miserable failures.

Separate budgets for health and care must have played a part in generating problems. The Devo Manc experiment finally cracks the problem of pushing patients on to someone else's budget. Hopefully this may be the start of a much better way of doing things. Unfortunately, in the short term, our council is expected to manage care to a high standard on a reducing budget. Expect a continual struggle to make ends meet and support being denied whenever this seems possible, for example, when implementing discretionary payments expect increasing attention to be paid to the client's assets or a gradual tightening in the eligibility criteria.

In spite of difficulties with the economy and NHS, or perhaps because of them, the Forum remains very well supported. At the time of writing we have over 6,000 paid up members. By the time of the AGM the number will be well on the way to 6,500. As I noted last year, the capacity of the staff and volunteers to cope is limited and our accommodation is sufficiently small to make getting additional hands very difficult. We remain on the lookout for roomier accommodation. Meanwhile, Joyce Pullen remains in charge of membership and is doing an absolutely marvellous job in keeping things running smoothly. In the past three years our membership has more than doubled. A big thank you is due to everyone, members who recommend us to their friends, the Committee for providing an attractive organisation to join and Joyce, her voluntary assistants and the office staff for ensuring things work well.

One sad aspect of our huge membership is the sometimes poor attendance at our meetings. Tony Watts goes to a great deal of trouble to invite speakers on a wide range of topics. The speakers generally give excellent talks but can be faced with an audience of as few as a dozen people or around one fifth of a percentage point of our membership. Sometimes we get over 50 to meetings which is much more appropriate, given the quality of the speakers. The attendance at the Winter Fair on 20th February was our highest ever with over 250 people in attendance. Feedback was very positive with many people asking when the next similar event would take place. These big "showcase" events are generally popular and show that our publicity is getting the information out to members so poor attendances are not a result of lack of publicity. As I said in last year's report; suggestions from members about regular meetings would be very welcome.

The Social Committee has provided a wide range of activities including evening dinners, lunches, day trips and holidays at home and abroad, ranging from a walk round London to forthcoming trips to Vietnam and Croatia. More details can be found on later pages of this report. The only complaints I have ever heard about the work of the social committee is that many of the trips fill up very quickly. Whilst this is a bit hard on members who are too late booking the popularity of the outings shows how successful the committee is in providing what people want. Many thanks are due to Irene and her team.

Once again a huge campaigning effort has been directed to the NHS. In particular Monty Meth, Vivien Giladi, and Peter Smith were extremely active, others helped from time to time. The report from the Health team on a later page gives full detail.

The advice clinic at the Dugdale Centre is now very fully used. Our thanks are due to all the experts and Forum member volunteer receptionists. The usage shows it is a valued service.

The Poetry group is thriving; the woodwork group is busy, sometimes full to capacity. A big thank you to the volunteers who keep these activities going. Special thanks to John Lombard who started and keeps going the woodworking group. He is soldiering on in spite of a health scare and will be a hard act to follow when he does eventually stand down.

The Forum depends on teamwork. In addition to people already mentioned Champak Mistry, our treasurer and Christine Whetstone, deputy Chair do vital work behind the scenes and our immense thanks are due to them. Jim Cattle is busily organizing fund raising. Jan Oliver, our development manager is an amazing tower of strength demonstrating tireless energy, enthusiasm and initiative. Liz and Dianne in the office, both do a splendid job. The effort that goes into organising something like the Winter Fair has to be seen to be believed. Thanks to everyone mentioned plus our wonderful volunteers. We could not function without people to sell raffle tickets, stuff newsletters in envelopes or act as guides and refreshment distributors at events.

Finally, thank you, the loyal member, without whom all would be pointless. We try to serve you well. If you can think of a better way of doing something let us know. Either have a quiet word with a Committee member or, if you are keen, join the committee. Extra active members of the Executive Committee are always welcome.

John Ball

Once again, your Health Team, William Mackay, Christine Whetstone, Monty Meth, Peter Smith, Tom Devine & Vivien Giladi have been working at full stretch, trying to keep up with the over-rapid pace of change, the impact of rising population in Enfield, the shortage of GPs, of first class GP practices, and the constant threat to long term provision of out-sourcing services to private providers – among other things!

Monty has kept an eagle eye on the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) which holds a brief for primary care, and submitted testing written questions on a regular basis as well as attending and putting points verbally. Unfortunately, the CCG works under the auspices of NHS London/NHS England so we don't have the kind of direct contact with local health providers that we had before the Health & Social Care Act. We are kept at a distance by layers of bureaucracy, but we do have a voice that is listened to on the CCG and various other local bodies.

William McKay has been sitting as the patient's rep on the CCG Board. There is now to be an elected representative from the Patient Participation Groups (PPGs). The Forum's position is that PPG's are not fully up and running across all practices and that, as a system, they are not yet mature and so, since the election is for 4 years, and there are only two candidates, we think this is premature. We are encouraging all our members to join the PPG at their surgery and William Mackay and Irene Richards have been taking this forward.

Peter makes sure that we are abreast of developments at North Midd and keeps us informed of problems and improvements. He has recently drawn attention to unnecessary delays in the blood-testing service and received an undertaking that these would be eliminated. We sense that the Older Persons' Assessment Unit (OAPU) at North Midd has not worked as well as the Chase Farm based unit, but their management is being merged, so we hope for improvements.

Vivien sits on the Health Improvement Partnership (HIP) which looks after public health, and the Forum has put its full support behind all the projects for prevention regarding keeping fit as we get older: regular exercise, stopping smoking, restricting alcohol and salt and adopting a healthy diet. The Council has given us active support for our Keep Warm initiatives and our falls prevention work.

We're going to adopt a 5 S approach for the coming year to encourage: stamina, suppleness, strength, skill and (p) sychology - in other words, keep going, keep moving, keep pushing and lifting, keep up your finer movements and try to keep stimulating social contacts.

We also back the flu and pneumonia jab campaigns and have done our utmost to get the government to stick by its original announcement to provide shingles immunisations to everyone between the ages of 70 and 79. Unfortunately it went back on its word and restricted the service to those of 70 and 79 only. We do seem to have achieved some

flexibility but feel let down by what we've rightly dubbed the shingles shambles.

Vivien also sits on the Health & Well-Being Board representing the whole of the voluntary sector, so we have input into this strategic board enabling us to know what is happening.

One thing that is happening is integration of health and social care, and Christine Whetstone sat on the Integration Board as the new way of co-working between the council and health was being forged. The Care Act will have a significant impact on the provision of care and we are watching its beginnings with great interest.

There is also a very welcome developing awareness of and response to dementia, and Tom Devine has been our watchdog on this, and William Mackay represents the Forum on the Enfield Dementia Alliance. Enfield Council was the first London borough to back dementia friendly policies which we have always championed.

Numbers of our members do not have a computer or means of access to one and we are pleased to say that Enfield Council has agreed that none of its services will be available on an on-line only basis.

William, Christine, Monty, Peter, Tom and Vivien have met with the relevant health service teams twice to express concern at delayed referral between GPs and consultants and over-lengthy waiting times to see a specialist. We have received detailed information about the way the backlog is being tackled and assurances that new referrals are not affected and are being speeded up. This is one example of where we hope our pressure on providers is helping our members. Some of the longest delays are for orthopaedics and physio, which are very important for older age groups.

Another very significant development has been the Royal Free Hospital (RFH) coming in to the Barnet/Chase Farm group. The chief executive made a point of meeting your Forum's health team and provided a full briefing on likely developments. We attend all the stakeholder meetings and, while we regret the lack of A&E at Chase Farm which is a loss for our members, particularly those living in Enfield North, we do recognise that the Urgent Care Centre has extended its hours and that the hospital as it stands is not fit for purpose. If the plans put before us are realised, we do think that we will have a 21st century facility on the site.

As always, we need more volunteers as we are all rather stretched. It is our NHS and we should be doing our all to act as watchdogs and defenders.

There is undoubtedly a serious challenge ahead. NHS England says it will need £30 billion by 2020 and that £22 billion will come from "efficiency" savings. We all know that, quite simply, this will mean cuts to services and further out sourcing to private providers and the introduction of charging.

Being involved does keep you on the ball. It may help to keep your NHS.

Forum progress

When our financial year ended on 31 March 2015 we recorded our highest-ever membership of 6,207 since the re-named Enfield Borough Over 50s Forum was approved by the 2001 AGM. In the absence of any grant aid from the government under its non-existent Big Society banner, the subscription income we derive from the membership is crucial to our maintaining an efficient staff and a modest office which together enhance our presence and influence in the Borough. It is also important to stress that this membership figure is not a paper figure, not a rolling figure year on year, as is the case in many other voluntary organisations. Due to the diligence and hard work of our volunteer membership secretary, Joyce Pullen, and her own team of volunteers, those 6,207 people had each paid their annual subscription for the year starting on April 1 2014. Some are Life Members of whom we now have 267, paying £100 individually or £150 for couples; many others pay their subscriptions for two or more years indicating their commitment and support for our Forum, and the effort it makes on behalf of all older people in the ever-growing Enfield Borough.



Wine and Chees Evening celebrating our 5000th member

What is so striking as the Forum goes from strength to strength, is not just the breadth of its range of activities, but the way individual Forum members strike out with their own initiatives, involving an ever-widening group of people, so fulfilling our claim that there's no need to be alone and lonely in Enfield. So we have groups linked to Forum members at the Southbury Leisure Centre setting off in 2014 for a week's holiday in Torquay or groups from Edmonton Leisure Centre going to Blackpool for the illuminations. This is a welcome and natural development to be encouraged as the Forum - with three part-time workers and a band of volunteers serving as its Executive Committee - cannot by themselves hope to satisfy the wishes of the 6,000!

We start the financial year 2015-16 with a new and coveted Freedom Pass that is valid until 31 March 2020, costing council taxpayers - of which we are many - nearly £12 million a year. This was just one of the universal benefits for pensioners that we campaigned to retain

with a petition and a deputation to our three Members of Parliament. It is fair to say that we had a very cordial reception from all of them, though we were disappointed to see that subsequently two of the three main political parties, the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats in their manifestos for the May 2015 general election sought to break the principle that certain benefits should be paid to everyone, irrespective of income, and they proposed to withdraw the winter fuel allowance from the top 5 per cent of pensioners with annual incomes above £42,000.

However, all three of the borough's MPs in the last Parliament expressed their support for the continuation of the "triple lock" on the state pension after the 2015 general election. It is easy to forget that at one time the Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Lib-Dem deputy prime minister and the Labour Shadow Chancellor all queried whether the country could afford to guarantee annual increases in the state pension linked to whichever is the highest between the rise in prices, average earnings or 2.5%. We are now told they are here to stay until 2020 at least - and we'd like to think that this change of heart had something to do with the campaigning spirit of pensioners nationwide.



At the House of Commons Enfield's 3 MPs support the 'Triple Lock'

Contact with the council

The Forum has enjoyed close contact and cooperation with the local authority irrespective of its political identity for many years. This has given us free use of the council chamber for our monthly members' meetings as well as occasional use of other rooms such as an event celebrating the recruitment of our 5,000th member held in the Civic Centre restaurant in April 2014 and attended by Enfield Council leader Doug Taylor.



Council Leader, Doug Taylor talking to the Forum

During the past year the council has also appointed a Cabinet member for Community Organisations and also designated one of its members to be our contact as the Older People's Champion - and we have had meetings with both Councillors Brett and Pite respectively.

Winter deaths

We devoted considerable time and energy to organising two major events around the issue of avoiding excess winter deaths among older people in Enfield owing, in part, to living in cold homes. We held a “beat the cold, beat the winter ‘flu’” event on October 1 2014 at the Artzone in Edmonton Green - which we linked to celebrating the United Nations declared International Day of Older People - and a Winter Fair at the Enfield County School in Enfield Town in February 2015. Both events were supported by National Energy Action (NEA), the newly-formed Enfield Community Action Partnership and British Gas and drew full capacity audiences.



Beat the cold, beat the winter ‘flu’ event on October 1 2014 at the Artzone in Edmonton Green

With 170 excess winter deaths recorded in Enfield in 2011-12 - that is deaths over the predicted average mortality rate - Enfield was the worst London borough in that year and among the worst 10 per cent in the country. So we now await to see if our work and that of others has borne fruit so that deaths due to cold is no longer a recognised statistic. Our involvement in this campaign has led to Forum member Simon Heaton being trained as an independent volunteer adviser. Although he is still working, he responded to one of our volunteer appeals and attended the NEA Energy Awareness Course and subsequent Train the Trainer Course, both run by National Energy Action in partnership with Enfield council.

He is now able to give individual advice on keeping the home warm – understanding energy bills, how to pay bills, the cheapest types of fuel and heating systems, how to calculate appliance running costs, guidance on switching energy suppliers and available tariffs, what is renewable energy, insulating your home, what causes damp and condensation, grant schemes to insulate your home and the different systems available. Simon has run one advice session at our Millfield House office and we hope will run more in 2015. We are currently looking at organising a course for Simon to train some of our volunteers who we hope will be visiting isolated older people in the Borough.

Liaison with Fusion Lifestyles

Fusion Lifestyles is a not-for-profit company operating the council-owned leisure centres under contract in Enfield and many other boroughs and towns in the country. What makes the Enfield-Fusion tie-up unique is that we are the only Forum with a thriving Over 50s customer base that works closely with them. The result is that in 2014-15 more than 76,000 attendances were registered by people aged 50 and over in Enfield for various exercising activities. We work closely with Fusion’s divisional management and with their specially-appointed Over 50s coordinator with the result that we now have more classes than ever - and they are still oversubscribed!



Special event in Edmonton Leisure

Our special Over 50s days: Monday Edmonton, Tuesday Southgate, Wednesday Southbury and Thursday Albany are so successful they are being gradually increased into two-day sessions. We are seeing more people taking part in swimming and gym sessions, pilates, zumba gold, badminton, table tennis, short mat bowls, easy line circuits, steam and sauna sessions, aquafit, leisure walks, total body workouts, tai chi, use of the fitness suite, yoga, aerobics and short tennis circuit training. So taken together with the greatly expanded Gyms in the Park and outdoor Tai Chi our long-standing campaign urging older people to: **“Get fit for a longer life”** has all the facilities and opportunities in Enfield to do just that.

We now have a record number of Forum members using the leisure centres due to the significant discounts the Forum negotiated for our members. They have signed up for either annual memberships, monthly direct debits or they buy a concession card offered at a special rate to Forum members enabling them to swim, use the gym or the varied range of exercise classes at half the normal price.

Dugdale advice sessions

Having launched our Monday morning free confidential advice sessions at the Dugdale Centre in June 2011, we can report that the service was steadily being used by around 500 people during the year – bringing the number of people to over 1,800 who have been seen by the team of advisers we have assembled since the venture started.

Our principal volunteers – Kathleen Young, Rita Clayton and Doreen Ashley - who receive the visitors at our reception desk - have again maintained their marvellous service and we know from them that in the last year some 200 people sought advice from our solicitor friend Michael Stennett or his colleagues, 180 people came to the CAB desk run so very regularly by Lorraine Hopwood and over 200 people between them saw tax adviser Jeff Rodin, Lorna Clarke from Jobsnet and Maria from the council's benefits advice team. During the year we also asked the audiology unit at Chase Farm Hospital to offer screening tests for hearing loss so that patients would know whether to ask for a GP appointment to secure a hospital referral. Some 45 people took advantage of this service.

Over 50s Film Club

The Forum has been the main driving force in securing the support of Cineworld, Southbury Road, for running a Monday morning Over 50s film club, showing top-rate films. Admission is £3 - less than half the normal price - which is now attracting audiences of 150 -200 per week. It was the Forum that approached the management, suggested and organised a “free taster show” - and offered free advertising space for films well in advance in our widely circulating Newsletter, that helped to get the show off the ground.

The management now tell us that almost 4,000 people have attended performances in the last year. The local Cineworld management readily acknowledge the Forum's support saying: **“You have played a big part in securing us with loyal and potentially new customers each week. We are very happy with the service and we are glad that we can offer a product at an affordable price where everyone can get together each week and enjoy the great films we show.”** We are still exploring ways of making this **“Monday morning out”** even more attractive, but this is surely just one good way to use the Forum's muscle to encourage older people not to spend more time on their own than they want to.

Forum Groups

The Forum sponsors or supports a variety of activity groups ranging from a unique **“after school hours”** weekly woodworking and handicrafts class which meets at Enfield County School, to a monthly poetry reading and composing group that meets monthly at a local library. We also have a book reading group meeting monthly at a library and we have more than 20 members in an Over 50s choir that is part of the Enfield Community Singers which rehearses every week under choirmaster Simon Gilbert and is constantly searching for more male singers. The choir has started to give public concerts and a series is planned for the Spring and Summer 2015. We also support a Knit and Natter group of some 67 ladies meeting twice weekly at the Dugdale Centre with the proceeds of some of their wonderful work going to local charities such as the Noah's Ark Children's Hospice based in Barnet.

Woodworking

The Woodwork Group enjoyed another very successful year, operating at full capacity over the course of the year. With the help of a grant from the Skills for Work Service the course leader, John Lombard, has been able to add another technique - Wood Turning - which will open up new areas of interesting projects. The skill level of those who attend has continued to improve as can be seen in the range of projects that have been completed this year. They include: over the door canopies, cutting boards, stools, storage boxes for large items of clothing, kitchen step-ups and a wide range of items brought in from home for repair. One of the larger projects that is nearing completion is a full size **“knock down”** candy cart. If time and funds permit John Lombard hopes to do some jewellery towards the end of 2015, which will be the 5th year of operation and John is particularly grateful to his two colleagues P J Brogan and Joe Ormsby for their assistance.



Woodworking group in action at Enfield County School

The Book Club

The Forum Book Club is now even more popular than ever with a regular attendance of 12 -15 members from a total membership of 31. Some members have moved away or are too frail to attend but still like to receive the emails with comments and suggestions for reading. The book club meetings are on different days each month to try and fit in with members regular commitments.

The past year has been very varied with books ranging from thrillers, classics, new books and even one or two non-fiction. We have attended national book club **“meet the authors”** such as Marian Keyes and Mark Haddon. We also had our regular annual anniversary lunch in October which was well attended. Members constantly tell the book club coordinator Sue Scott how much they enjoy the meetings and many new friendships have been formed. Sue says: **“You don't need to be intellectual or a book fanatic to join, as long as you enjoy reading and have an open mind”.**

The Poetry Group

The Forum's poetry group continues to flourish and meet under the direction of coordinator David Blake. Following the publication of its second anthology of poems composed by some 23 group members under the title **"Getting older"** which includes the work of some 23 Forum members, this has been followed up by our printing a short poem from a group member in issues of our Newsletter. The group meets every third Thursday in the month at Enfield Library.

IT Training and Support for Over 50s

The severe financial strain and pressure being felt by all local authorities due to cuts in government grants, is leading to staff cuts and more council services only being available on-line. While more older people are gradually getting acquainted with the digital revolution, using iPads, iPhones, Tablets etc., this is, in turn, leading to other older people who are not yet using the internet feeling cut-off from the mainstream. We have sought to minimise the impact of this development by firstly asking the council to ensure that services continue to be available by personal contact while at the same time we are working with the Libraries and Museums Service in offering free tuition courses either individually or in groups working with local schools, with the aim

Falls Awareness

Every year since September 2003 we have held an event at one of our leisure centres seeking to encourage people to become fitter and active, in the hope of reducing the danger of falling, which so often leads to more complications. In 2014 more than 200 people attended our Preventing Falls and Keeping Active Day at Edmonton Leisure Centre. It was opened by Andy Love MP and the main speaker was Dr Maurice Cohen, physician for the elderly and clinical director at the North Middlesex Hospital. Every year we strive to relay the message that falls do not occur just because we are getting older. They happen for a reason and we need to find out the cause of falls, so that they do not lead to people living in fear of falling, becoming lonely and depressed.



Edmonton MP Andy Love opening our 2014 Falls Awareness event

Unfortunately, in 2014 there were still more than 1,000 admissions to the Barnet and Chase Farm hospitals due to falls - the majority were aged 65 and over - costing the NHS some £2.7 million. While we will continue to encourage people to take more care themselves, we also intend to monitor GP surgeries who are supposed to keep a register of patients who fall.

Combating Loneliness

The Forum has been affiliated to the Campaign to end Loneliness since it was launched by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in 2010 and we have been ever mindful of the health problems that can result from social isolation.

While we respect and recognise that many older people are happy and content with their own company, reports that almost a million people now rely on television or a pet for company gives greater emphasis to the Forum's role as the provider of many opportunities for individuals to socialise and play a part in the wider community.

We are currently in discussion with the Enfield NHS Clinical Commissioning Group on a proposal to work with patients prone to depression and in this report we list our many affiliates as evidence of the wide range of activities and interests that are on offer in the Borough and proving that you don't need to be old and lonely - unless you chose to be.

Our Forum's approach and work sits perfectly alongside the Enfield Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy 2014 -2019 which states it is working with local people: **"to strengthen communities and social networks to minimise the impact of loneliness and social isolation"**.

It is encouraging to report the Forum has been awarded a small grant from the Residents Priority Fund for a pilot project to identify older people living alone in three Enfield Wards - Chase, Lock and Turkey Street - and to support them through providing information and the opportunity to become more engaged with older people groups in the Borough. The project is for one year and to be completed by April 2016. Full details will be covered in future Forum newsletters.

International Older People's Day



This well attended event was supported by Enfield Council with National Energy Action and British Gas, with thanks to Enfield County School for Girls in making the premises available for the day

The Forum is now on You Tube

Anyone wishing to find out more about the Forum activities and what we are about can now do so by visiting:

<https://youtu.be/CDiyj8Jd5NU>

and

<https://youtu.be/3yP4i0yUUqY>

The Video clips were put together by Forum member, **Maria Tolley** and are a terrific example of the talent that is available with our membership. Our thanks for using her skills for the benefit of the Forum.

Office and Development Report

The office is continually busy with renewals and queries from our 6,000 plus members, with minuting the various committees, with sending out enews and with the organisation of 3 members meetings per month. But still, this year, office staff and volunteers have organized a range of events aimed at the more deprived parts of the Borough:

- Several free live jazz events held in Edmonton and Enfield Highway (many thanks to JCR Jazz)
- A quiz night at Millfield House
- Reggae Dance nights – held at All Saints Hall in Edmonton and extremely popular
- A Christmas lunch free to people over 80 living alone
- Preventing Falls and Keeping Active Day at Edmonton Leisure Centre, funded by Enfield Council and attended by 180 people. Many hours of preparatory work was undertaken by Over 50s Forum staff, Fusion staff and Over 50s Forum volunteers. Many thanks to Dominic Hall from Fusion for organising the activities.
- Energy and Winter Warmth Day on 1st October (International Older People's Day). The purpose of this event was to mark International Older People's Day by preparing as many older people as possible for the winter cold; to avoid letting the cold make us ill and causing excess winter deaths. The event was only made possible by the formation of the Enfield Community Action Partnership linking Enfield Council with National Energy Action and British Gas, whose inaugural meeting was attended by the Forum President, Monty Meth. Thanks to the support of National Energy Action and British Gas at

that meeting we were able to link the International Day of Older People with our campaign to cut the number of winter deaths due to cold homes and increase the numbers receiving the flu jab. The day was organised by us and funded by a grant from British Gas. 46% of attendees came from the deprived postcodes and 17% reported themselves as having a disability.

- A Winter Fair, combining two messages. First all the information, advice and services that help our members to keep their homes warm, themselves healthy and hopefully, their energy bills reasonable during the winter months. Second we showcased the large range of activities organised by the Forum affiliates and others. Nearly 250 people attended of whom 100% enjoyed the event and 80% gained useful information. We thank British Gas for funding part of the event and Enfield County School for the use of their premises.

Volunteers have ensured that the Forum is represented at Open Days across the Borough with stalls at Edmonton Festival, The Carers Family Fun Day, Palmers Green Festival and Enfield Town Show and have been present at the Care Home Carers Network Partnership meetings and conferences aiming to combat loneliness amongst older people.

Our thanks as always to our office staff, Jan Oliveru, Diane Barron and Liz Delbarre and our office volunteers – Yvonne Jeremiah, Fiona Sanders, Aparna Chaudhuri, Dipra Sinharay, Joan Stephenson, Jaya Sinha, Hazel Kinsler, Jeff Chesnick, Barbara Dean, Joy Bateman, Linda Chee and Dorrett Crooks and many thanks also to our events volunteers too numerous to mention.

Social Events and trips

No Forum member could accuse the committee of not showing imagination in the events it provides. Our yearly offering covers outings that can cost nothing – from a guided walk along the River Lea – to an overseas trip to Cuba that runs into a couple of thousand pounds! This enables us to cater for all ages, all incomes and dreams and group sizes which vary from 10 to over 100.

We also cater for those who like to try out different food and venues. There is an incredible variety of these in the borough and it is a policy of the committee that we support our local restaurants.

Some events have become “annual” favourites. Our Christmas lunch (and the January *Encore*) and Disco are always booked out within days of being advertised. Similarly, the coach trip to Dovercourt has become one of those recurring events as have the Cockney Evenings at The Wonder Pub.

If you have missed out it is usually because you haven't got to the phone quickly enough after receiving the Newsletter! Almost everything we have organised has been well supported by Forum Members: attendance has grown over the years with variety of events.

A result of this has been that the committee has been able to make a significant contribution to the funds required to keep the Forum going. In the past year it has contributed £2,118 to Forum funds.

Committee members have also brought forward initiatives such as the newly announced Film Forum so that you need not go to the pictures on your own but can join with others, informally.

We are always seeking new events for the Social Calendar but would make an appeal that we need new members and other ideas. Any Forum member can join us – but we expect you to work towards our common goal of providing activities for Forum members. It is an ongoing challenge.

The Chair of the Social Committee, Irene Richards has expressed personal thanks each and every committee member for their hard work and commitment. Also the committees sincere thanks to Liz Delbarre, for her dedicated assistance.

The Forum is very fortunate in benefiting from the Social Committee's endeavours, enthusiasm and initiatives.

Finance

Our finances remain healthy as can be seen from the financial statements in Appendix II with our current assets standing at £112,878 up £5,162 from 2014. (see page 11) Income was considerably down on last year but exceeded ordinary expenditure by £3,045. In addition there was a net contribution from the trips and events of £2,118 much of which that was down to the efforts of the Social Committee.

The growth in membership has continued so that by the end of the year it stood at 6,230. Subscription income was slightly down on 2014 mostly because many members in that year had paid in advance for multiples of the annual subscription. We welcome this trend as it reduces the administrative effort for our office staff, membership secretary and volunteers at renewals' time.

Gift Aid on subscriptions income was a valuable £6,518 addition to our income, as was the £4200 from advertisers in the Newsletter. Our thanks to our advertisers for supporting the Forum. The cost of printing and distribution was £19,506 which is the most significant expenditure other than staff costs. Here it should be noted that the Forum supports a policy of remuneration at least matching the London Living Wage in recognition of the real contribution our staff make to the smooth and efficient running of the Forum.

For 2015-16 we have no guaranteed external funding so that there will be a £10K to £15K gap in our income. The executive committee is taking steps to fill this gap through appropriate fundraising. Jim Cante, our fundraiser, is as first step organising a 200 club lottery with the first draw due to take place in June 2015. Any members interested in supporting this venture should contact the Forum Office. If we are able to attract 200 members it would give us £5000 a year towards our future funding gap.

Capacity building project

Members will be aware that the Forum was awarded £39k spread over 3 years by the Local Authority to tackle inequality and vulnerability in the Borough. The aims of the project were:

- **To strengthen the structure of the Forum, to meet the demands of an increased membership and to ensure the involvement of older people in the community.**
- **To improve the support and management of volunteers.**
- **To increase the participation of those over 50s living in the more deprived areas of the borough (N9, N18 and EN3 post-codes) by 50%.**
- **To increase attendance at Enfield Leisure Centres**
- **To increase the number of days and events for older less mobile and vulnerable people.**

The close of the Financial Year saw the end to this three year grant and it is pleasing to note the targeted outcomes for the project have all been significantly exceeded. This welcome grant allowed us to substantially increase our membership particularly in the East of the Borough where we now have 1,667 members and as demonstrated throughout this report our Forum now has a very effective administration for supporting Over 50s across the Borough.

We have been able to increase our numbers of special events, introducing a Winter Fair each year, running extra events aimed at keeping vulnerable people warm in winter, as well as our Falls Awareness Day and Conference in all attracting more than 1,901 attendees. During the period of the grant we have held 335 social events in contrast to our projections of 96.

APPENDIX I

Organisations Affiliated to the Forum

Abraham Lewin Unity Lodge

Age UK Enfield

Ajex

Association of Ingleborough Residents

BHP Residents Assoc.

Bounces Rd Area Neighbourhood Watch

Bramley Ladies Bowling Club

Bury Lodge Bowls Club

Carers Trust Lea Valley (Crossroads)

Club 60 Plus

Club Terza ETA

Community Aid

Cypriot Elderly & Handicapped Group Enf

Deep Indian 50 Plus Assoc - Enfield

Enfield and Southgate Workers Educational Association

Enfield Art Circle

Enfield Carers Centre

Enfield Caribbean Association

Enfield Choral Society

Enfield Community Singers

Enfield Croquet Club

Enfield Diabetes Support Group

Enfield Highway Community Assoc

Enfield Light Operatic & Dramatic Soc

Enfield National Trust Association

Enfield RSPB Local Group

Enfield Soroptimists

Enfield Veterans Combined Services C.C.

Enfield Unison Retired members Assoc

Enfield Writers Workshop

First Tuesday Ladies Group

Friday Morning Art Circle

Friends of All Saints

Friends of Arnos Park

Friends of Jubilee Park N9

Grovelands Bowling Club

Heart Throbs Cardiac Support Group

Holtwhites Bowls Club

Jaywalks

Keep Fit + Circle Dance

Knit and Knatter Group

Macular Disease Society (Enfield Group)

Meet a Need with Christian Care

Nightingale Community Hospice Trust

North London Humanist Group

Oakwood Horticultural Society

Palmer's Green & Southgate U3A

Probus Club of Enfield

Pymmes Park Bowls Club

Ruth Winston Centre

Selborne Bowling Club

SilverThreads Senior Citizens Group

Southgate Oakwood Townswomen's Guild

Southgate Opera Group

Southgate Society of Arts

St Johns Art Group

Stroke Action Social Club

The Enfield Society

The Ladies Thursday Club

The Royal Air Forces Association (Enfield)

The Walkabouts Rambling Group

Weir Hall Ratepayers Association

Winchmore Hill Bowling Club

Winchmore Hill Community Care

Winchmore Hill Folk Dance Club

Winchmore Singers

Winchmore String Orchestra

WRVS Darby & Joan Club

Enfield Over 50s



The Forum Executive Committee



The Forum's Treasurer



Members getting in on the act with David Lammy, MP, when he took a 'selfie' after talking to the Forum about the Enfield Riots



Forum meeting in the Civic Chamber at the Civic Centre



Quizing the Care Quality Commission



Delegation about to meet our MPs at the House of Commons



Knit & Natter at the Enfield Show



Forum Winter Fair at the ArtZone



Forum visit to Palmers Green



Forum members visiting the Palmers Green Mosque



Presenting the Forum petition to save the NHS



Fitness session for Forum Members holidaying in Torquay



Forum's International Older Peoples Day



Forum members on a Day Boat Trip along the River Lee



Stallholders at the Winter Fair held at the ArtZone



Raffle winners International Older Peoples Day

