



SPREADING THE MESSAGE



You'll see from this Newsletter that the Forum's voice is getting out to a wider audience in the Borough. Forum member Roy Barrows has now taken up his position as the Over 50s representative on the Board of Enfield Leisure Centres Trust.

Des Hegarty is now representing the Forum on the Primary Care Trust's important coronary heart disease (CHD) local implementation group - part of the national service framework for older people seeking to cut the number of CHD victims and ensure patients speedily receive the required rehabilitation service - and we have had the first two meetings of the Edmonton Forum, providing for the first time a sounding board for older people to express their concerns on local issues in that part of the Borough.

Forum member Jean Calvert has been busy behind the scenes assisting the Council's health scrutiny panel with its research into stroke services at local hospitals and also working on the Primary Care Trust's Unique Care and Single Assessment projects.

Forum secretary Tony Watts will shortly be joining the important Enfield Strategic Partnership Board

as an Enfield Community Empowerment Network representative which covers the voluntary sector and he is becoming a voluntary sector representative on the new Enfield Observatory, a web-based service holding masses of information about our Borough.

Our membership is now up to 225 with an additional 27 voluntary affiliated organisations so we come up to the annual general meeting in good shape - but we could always be stronger, better organised, more influential and punch with more weight. And for that, our primary need is a stronger and more representative committee and only you can make that possible by putting your own name forward - or allowing others to do it for you. So let's go for it at the AGM on Tuesday 26 April.

Monty Meth

Chair

RENEW MEMBERSHIP NOW

Your membership renewal form is enclosed with this Newsletter. Don't leave it lying around please. Decide now to fill it in and send it off or hand it in at the next Forum meeting. Better still, get a friend to join as well! This year we will be issuing you with a membership card which you will need to claim your special discount at the Enfield Leisure Centres (See details back page).

Forthcoming FORUM Events

at the Civic Centre
Silver Street, Enfield Town.

Tuesday 22 March at 11 am

Europe and Older People

Speaker: **Claude Moraes**, Member of the all-party inter-group on Ageing at the European Parliament.

Wednesday 30 March at 10.30 am

Join **the Mayor of Enfield** in launching **the Leisure Centres New Deal for older people** at **Southbury Leisure Centre, Southbury Road.**

Come with your gear for physical activities. Refreshments

Wednesday 30 March at 2.00 pm for 2.30pm start

Enfield's new Health Improvement Action Plan 2005-2008

Speaker: **Glenn Stewart**, PCT Assistant Director Public Health.

Road Safety for Drivers and Pedestrians

Speaker: **Kerry Reboul**, Community Road Safety officer

Tuesday 26 April at 2.00 pm for 2.30pm start

Forum Annual General Meeting

Speaker: **Rev Nims Obunge**, Chief Executive, Enfield Peace Alliance

Tuesday 31st May 10 am for 10.30 start

Bridging the Generation Gap - Working with Young People

Police Sergeant Neil Standing, Youth and Community Team Supervisor

PLEASE NOTE
The different times and days of our meetings

Houseproud scheme helps Enfield homeowners

The Home Improvement Trust (HIT) is a not for profit organisation set up by the Government in 1997 to enable older and disabled people to live safely and independently in their own homes, helping to prevent poor health and reducing the need for residential care.

HIT works with Enfield and other councils to provide practical support and in accessing cost efficient funding for home owners and private sector tenants to repair, improve, maintain or adapt their homes. HIT provides help to tackle poor or unsuitable housing, enabling people to remain in their own homes: safe, secure, warm and independent.

The range of work possible under the Enfield "Care and Repair" scheme includes anything from a new bathroom

to a new roof, adaptations to make life easier for a disabled person, replacing doors, windows, improving energy efficiency and home security. The HIT service is delivered locally with case workers providing a single and consistent point of contact.

HIT also provides information on no risk equity release loans using regulated lenders who will provide a no-repossession clause secured on equity of the property.

A freephone telephone number 0800 7837569 is available for a free information pack and video.

This issue of our Newsletter has been funded by the Home Improvement Trust and we acknowledge with grateful thanks their generous support.

Edmonton Forum Formed

Geoff Robinson is the first secretary of the newly-launched Edmonton Forum, a sub-group of the main Enfield Borough Forum and formed to focus on local issues in that part of the Borough, as proposed under the terms of our lottery funding.

The first two meetings discussed the major Edmonton Green development project which revealed just how much local people were in the dark about the changes being planned for them, and the safer neighbourhood policing project aimed at improving contact with the local community.

Inspector John Antoine, a safer neighbourhood project leader, drew our attention to the reversal of policing policy from the fast car impression of policing to one of community-led policing. He stressed the need for partnership working with local people to improve their quality of life and said that eight wards in the Borough

- Upper Edmonton, Lower Edmonton and Edmonton Green, Town, Southbury, Southgate, Palmers Green and Enfield Highway would each have their own neighbourhood police teams by April. Each team would comprise a police sergeant, two constables and three police community support officers who would have the power to detain a suspect.

Members were assured that a new police shop would open at Edmonton Green and Inspector Antoine said that the police were hoping to recruit 40 key individual networkers in each of the safer neighbourhood wards who would be their eyes and ears and act as a focus group to tell the police whether what they were doing was right - or wrong.

The next meeting of the Edmonton Forum will be on Friday 29 April at Edmonton Green Leisure Centre. Further details from Olivia Goodfellow 020 8447 8841.

Forum's first coach trip

The date: Saturday 21 May. Meeting point: Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield Town. The time: 9 am. We'll be going to Canterbury and stopping on the way home for a cream tea at Biddendon Vineyard. The subsidised cost will be £10 per person and the trip is restricted to Forum members and their partners. We have a 51-seater coach and bookings will be taken first come, first served. To reserve your place call Anne Wood 020 8372 4123.

We are only able to offer this day out for £10 because of the generous grant from the Old Enfield Charitable Trust.

Home library

- at your service

A home library service is available to any Enfield resident who is unable to use a branch library due to age, mobility or their caring responsibilities. There is no age limit and a visit can be arranged every four weeks to either deliver books to your home, take a mobile library to your home or drive you to Bullsmoor library by minibus.

They will even arrange to leave collections of books at residential or sheltered homes and lunch clubs. Books can be provided in large and standard print, recorded books on CD or tape, music on CD and films on video and dvd. There is a hire charge for the films but everything else is free.

If you could use this service - or know of someone else that it would help - then please ring Stephanie Lafferty on 01992 716010 who will visit them briefly to see what service suits them best. This is a first-rate service that we must get everyone to utilise to the full - otherwise we could end up like Barnet where a mobile library has been cut as part of its £369,000 budget cut in library services.

Digital aids progress

Forum member Tony Kinsler writes to say members may be interested to know that things are moving on the Digital Hearing Aid front.

'This morning I attended Amplivox at Southgate for an assessment and they confirmed that I need one of these devices. An impression mould was taken and I am to return in exactly two weeks for a fitting.' This is NHS work which they have farmed out to this company, which reduces the pressure on the audiology unit at Chase Farm Hospital and is to be welcomed.

This link with Amplivox enables NHS patients to be seen by the private sector and be fitted with NHS aids to NHS standards and complements the work of the Chase Farm unit which is doing evening overtime to cut the backlog.

SAGA's tips for a long life

The February issue of SAGA magazine carried 50 hints on slashing the risk of illness. Among them were:

- Doing good, does you good. Seniors who give emotional or practical support to others can reduce their risk of dying prematurely by as much as 60%, compared with others. So play a bigger part in the Forum's activities.
- Tuck into tuna and anchovies, salmon and other oily fish - they boast omega-3 fatty acids linked to an 81% reduction in sudden male deaths.
- Drink tea. The national drink appears to inhibit some of the brain chemicals associated with Alzheimers disease. To reap the most benefit swap black tea for green tea.
- Enjoy a glass of red wine which may play a role in fighting lung cancer and asthma. Helps to guard against the risk of heart disease and stroke and raises the level of "good" cholesterol.
- Use it or lose it. Give the brain a workout to defend yourself against dementia. Learn a language, do the crossword, read or play cards and board games.
- Chocolate containing a large amount of cocoa solids is actually good for you. 50mg contains as many anti-oxidising flavanoids as six apples, two glasses of wine or seven onions.
- Reduce salt. Sprinkling more on top of the hidden salt in processed foods can raise blood pressure and risk heart disease and kidney failure.
- Stay married. A long and happy marriage lengthens life expectancy - divorce or remarrying can shorten it!
- Stop smoking. No matter how late in life you give up, within five years your risk of heart attack halves and after 10 years your risk level is the same as someone who has never smoked and your lung cancer risk drops 50%.
- Get involved with our Forum. A study of 800 American retirees found that those who took on a valued role in a club had significantly longer lives.
- Culture is good for you. A Swedish study found that people who visited galleries, theatres and concerts were 36% more likely to live longer, possibly because pleasure boosts the immune system.
- Five alive. Make sure you get your five portions of fruit and veg a day to get your required amount of antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, fibre and phytochemicals.
- Physical exercise helps halve heart disease risk, builds bone strength and maintains balance to avoid life-threatening falls.
- According to Fred Hale, the world's oldest man who died last November at the age of 113, the recipe for a long life is a spoonful of pollen, another of honey, a short walk and a spot of gardening.
- Or you could just eat brazil nuts and almonds, porridge and tomato-based sauces, live yoghurt, anything from the onion family like garlic and leeks, an apple a day and blueberries, cranberries, blackcurrants and tart cherries - but not altogether!!

Random Round-up

Audrey Hardwick, the longest-serving member of the Forum committee who has been a member since the Forum was born in the 1980s, has decided not to seek re-election at the coming AGM. We thank Audrey most sincerely for all her work and hope to still see her at Forum meetings.

It was good to see **Derek Searle** at the February Forum meeting after going into hospital for heart by-pass surgery on December 31. Derek is a former treasurer of the Forum and we hope he continues to make good progress on the way to a complete recovery.

John Hennell, who took over the trusteeship from Derek, has informed us that he will be stepping down at the AGM. John has done a sterling job for some years, despite his disability and we greatly appreciate his work on the Forum's behalf.

With much regret we have to tell members that **John Chinnery**, a former Forum committee member has passed away. John was our representative at the Greater London Forum for older people which he diligently attended for many years on our behalf.

Miriam Duberry on 020 8351 1322 is looking for someone to do some light shopping once a week for an elderly person who cannot get out.

Thanks to **Ron Phippen** who set himself a target of collecting 100 signatures for the petition urging the Council to restore the Citizens Advice Bureau grant - and did it in record time - and the CAB has now received more money!

Welcome to the Forum

We extend a very warm welcome to the following new individual members and Groups who have recently joined us to strengthen our support for older people.

Jean Bigsby, Marion and Roger Biss, Norma and Barrington Chin, Marian Dawidowski, Jean Hulits, Beryl Piggott, Elsie Powter, Pauline Reynolds, Carol Sivak.

Groups recently affiliating to the Forum include **Leigh Hunt Drive Neighbourhood Watch, Church Street Residents Association and the Walkabouts Rambling Group.**

Will you be at the most important Forum meeting of the year?

That's the annual general meeting where we consider the past year's work, decide our priorities and, most important of all, elect a new Committee. So we want you to come forward and offer to help. If you need the Forum, the Forum needs you.

So please come along and have your say and hear a most impressive guest speaker, Rev. Nims Obunge, chief executive of the Peace Alliance, a national crime reduction charity. He is a member of the Home Office round table on gun crime and the Metropolitan Police working group on stop and search.

The date. Tuesday 26 April. The time: 2pm for a 2.30 pm start

BGOP in Enfield?

BGOP stands for Better Government for Older People and Mervyn Eastman, its director, came to the Forum in 2003 to tell us about the work they are doing to change attitudes and services, to make life better for older people. They work to set up partnerships between government, local authorities, health trusts, forums like ours and other organisations to influence and improve policies and performance.

BGOP exists to improve the lives of older people by encouraging Councils to promote, encourage, inform and ensure that older people are engaged in all aspects of service delivery. In other words, encouraging organisations such as ours to work in partnership to secure a unified approach to older people's services.

Schemes in Lancashire, Newcastle, Sheffield, Lewisham and Hammersmith & Fulham and elsewhere have seen older peoples groups making real progress in influencing their respective local authorities when introducing policies and delivery systems for services for older people.

Enfield Council has been a subscribing member of BGOP since it started and the Forum became an affiliate member over a year ago, but compared with other parts of the country very little has happened.



BGOP's Journal 'stratagem'



Cheryl Barrott
BGOP

Recently the Forum has been in discussion with Council officers and BGOP Consultant, Cheryl Barrott, on how we might work together here in Enfield under the BGOP umbrella to support initiatives that will benefit our local community. We will keep you informed of progress on this front. Hopefully, when Mervyn Eastman next visits our Forum it will be to discuss the success of BGOP in Enfield.

University of the Third Age

The Enfield Branch of U3A has regular meetings throughout the year and also has various groups which meet in members' houses. U3A meets on the second Monday of each month at 2 p.m. at St Pauls Centre, Church St., EN2 6AR. Visitors are welcome on payment of £1 or can join for a yearly fee of £12. There are also pub lunches on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month. Only members can attend U3A run classes.

Future meetings up to August 2005 include:
March 14th "A Century of Women's Lives"
April 11th "Knights and Lawyers"
May 9th "London to Nepal"
June 13th "Prime Ministers' Partners"
July 11th "Mayfaie"
August 8th "Buttons for Persuasion"

Full details: 020 8882 1918
or val@vhay.freeserve.co.uk

EnfieldU3A web site is www.enfieldu3a.org.uk

Wanted

The Forum still urgently needs a volunteer to lead the campaign for improved public toilets. You will get plenty of help, but we need somebody to take some responsibility. Volunteers please phone Olivia 020 8447 8841

Tell the scams to scam

We had Betty Armah, a senior trading standards officer, at a recent Forum meeting warning us of the growth in various scams, one of which left a local 86-year-old pensioner £7,000 worse off. These scams are estimated to be costing people about £1 billion a year and there are hundreds of different kinds - fake lotteries, phoney prize draws for exotic holidays, accessing credit cards, fake investment schemes etc

People are being conned every day because they do not stop and think about the "goodies" they are being offered. One guiding thought for all of us is that if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. We will be distributing a special "How to recognise a scam" warning leaflets at the next Forum meeting. So make sure you pick up a copy. Be vigilant and remember the people behind these scams want to steal your hard-earned money. Don't let them get away with it.

REMEMBER - glossy brochures, a silver tongue and a well-dressed caller does not mean they are genuine.

- never give them money, buy anything or phone a premium rate telephone number to claim a prize.
- never fall for the deadline trick that says you will lose the prize if you don't respond right away.
- never hand over details of your bank, building society, credit card, passport or similar documents ostensibly to claim a prize. Your details will be used for fraud.
- be wary of somebody who says he's from the Council, police, bank etc - ask for identification, particularly if you are not expecting anyone. So stop, think and be sceptical of any stranger that calls.

REMINDER

The 22nd March Forum meeting at 11 am is about Europe and Older People - jobs, discrimination, pensions, health and social care. It is NOT about the euro, constitution, EU membership etc.

Pension facts

From April 2005 the basic state retirement pension will rise by £2.45 a week for a single pensioner and £3.95 a week for a couple. This will bring the amount to £82.05 for a single pensioner and £131.20 for a couple.

Forum member Peter Smith tells us that if the pension increase, which until 1980 was linked to average male earnings, and not prices, had not been broken, the basic state pension in April would be £113.12 for a single pensioner and £180.90 for a couple.

The Pension Credit rates will also be increased in April, guaranteeing everyone aged 60 and over a contribution towards a weekly income of at least £109.45 for single people and £167.05 for couples.

People aged 65 and over with modest savings or private pensions could qualify for extra money, even if their weekly income is up to £151 for single people and £221 for couples.

Payments may also be backdated for up to a maximum of 12 months from the first date of entitlement. So anyone whose income is below these figures should pick up the phone and dial free 0800 99 1234 to get an estimate of where they stand. An adviser will fill in the form there and then and return it to you for signature.

Despite the ease of applying, it is estimated that some £1.5 billion is sitting at the Treasury in unclaimed pension

credit - and there's more money lying there in unclaimed council tax rebates and housing benefit making a total of some £3 billion

So it is great news that Enfield Council officers are now working closely with the Pensions Service and have already identified 2000 cases in the Borough where a council taxpayer receives the pension / savings credit, but not council tax rebate and housing benefit. They are now setting out to contact the people they believe qualify for help to urge them to claim, and they will be setting up joint visiting teams with the pensions service.

Help the Aged and many other organisations including our Forum have for a long time been calling on the Government to reduce its reliance on means-tested benefits.

Latest figures we have show that the number of individual beneficiaries of pension credit are:

Edmonton 5,130 and the average weekly payment is £59.09

Enfield North 4,685 - average payment £51.75

Enfield Southgate 3,965 - average payment £60.08

The number of pension credit recipients not previously getting the minimum income guarantee is: Edmonton 1,270, Enfield North 1,315 and Enfield Southgate 1000.

No ode to joy here

Despite holding a £10 million balance, Enfield Council is sticking to its guns in refusing to reinstate the 40-year-old fee concessions for pensioner, disabled and unemployed students attending the opera and symphony orchestra evening courses at Southgate College.

The 25 or so adult students affected by a 170% increase in their fees over the last three years, estimate that to restore the 50% concession would cost the Council less than £3,500 a year.

The Forum first asked the Council to look again at its decision last November. After first disclaiming responsibility and then seeking to pass the buck to the College and the grant-making Learning and Skills Council, we have now been told that "it is inevitable that councils change their priorities from time to time".

In a letter to the Forum, the council "accepts that withdrawal of the subsidy is extremely disappointing to those who have previously accessed this service. However, on this occasion the money has been targeted at vocational training for people entering the workforce".

That sounds very laudable until we see the Council subsidising a course at Southgate College on soup and vegetable preparation. And the Council's decision is clearly against the spirit of the Government's recent Skills White Paper which said: "We expect pensioners to benefit substantially from the arrangements for safeguarding funding for leisure learning, and that in all areas learning for pensioners would be one of the priorities to be pursued through the new planning and funding agreements".

Although the Council's letter to the Forum said: "we regard this item as now concluded", the opera and orchestra students are, we understand, planning to launch a petition with the Forum's support while we will try to ascertain why support for these courses was withdrawn without warning, explanation or consultation - and without considering any impact it would have on the future of the College's symphony orchestra and opera company.

Keep Active, Feel Better, Live Longer

That's one of the arguments we use in encouraging people to join the Forum. And now comes the supporting evidence from an Age Concern survey. This shows that people over the age of 65 are twice as likely as other age groups to be living in isolation, spending over 21 hours of the day alone.



Forum 2004 outgoing committee: Ir Chris Mitchell, Doreen Hogg, Don Smith, Jennifer McIntyre, Derek Friggins, Irene Frost, Monty Meth, John Hennell, Anne Wood, Olivia Goodfellow, Tony Watts

Free dental check-ups.....but they're in Wales!

When Mr Mayur Bhatt, a practising dentist and the PCT's dental adviser, addressed the Forum's February meeting he told us that people aged over 60 in Wales have free dental check-ups - and so do people anywhere in the country receiving the pension credit and similar benefits.

While pensioners in London get free bus, tube and train travel over the Greater London area, there does not seem to be any uniformity on the concessions available across the country with too many towns, cities and rural areas in particular still not receiving a really meaningful travel "Freedom Pass".

So we would like to see a concerted two-pronged campaign to expand the "Freedom Pass" to give all seniors free nationwide travel, estimated to cost the Government £300 million a year -

and free dental check-ups for pensioners everywhere.

Mr Bhatt told us that there are 52 dental practices in Enfield of which 40 accept NHS patients. When the NHS was set up in 1948 most dental work with older people involved taking out teeth and putting in dentures. Nowadays, the picture is very different because older people are keeping their teeth for much longer, creating the need for continued dental care throughout life.

There is currently a shortage of dentists which will partially be filled by the recruitment of 750 dentists from India, Poland and elsewhere. Meanwhile, if people have difficulty finding a dentist there are two access centres, one at the North Middlesex hospital 020 8807 7841 and the other at Enfield Island 01992 703535, where NHS dental treatment is available.

Bridging the Gap

Forum members present when we discussed the Borough's recent crime survey will be interested to know that there is now a dedicated team of police officers at Ponders End police station dealing with all aspects of school life across the Borough.

The youth and community team leader is Sergeant Neil Standing who told us that one of the team's aims is to bridge the generation gap with older people by tackling all forms of anti-social behaviour both inside and outside our schools.

"Working with the local education welfare service, we run a number of truancy patrols and based on local intelligence and help from the public we make home visits to the poor attenders in an effort to improve school attendance. We also run a very successful voluntary police cadet corps working with some 40 people from different social backgrounds every week", said Sergeant Standing.

During school holidays the police co-ordinate a number of schemes to reward improved behaviour and school attendance, encouraging young people

to improve their confidence and self-esteem. The schemes include scuba diving, performing arts courses and attending Spurs and Arsenal soccer schools. Recently, five schools and 48 pupils went to the Pineapple dance studios where they had the opportunity of working with the cast from a number of shows including Mary Poppins and Saturday Night Fever.

Other students worked with singing coaches who had appeared on the TV show "can't sing, can sing". The whole scheme was provided as a reward for improved behaviour and school attendance. The youth and community police officers also talk both to young people and parents about drug abuse, bullying, stop and search procedures, crime and anti-social behaviour.

In the near future, the youth and community team will be aligned with the safer neighbourhood police teams and will be based in schools in a number of wards in the Borough.

Printed and published by Enfield Borough Over 50s Forum. Contact: Tony Watts, secretary, Tel: 020 8886 9125. E-mail: tony_watts@enfieldover50sforum.org.uk

Winter fuel payments - don't miss them

The last two weeks of February and early March were not only the worst of the winter, so far, but the harshest winter for 19 years and we've all been spending much more money keeping warm. So with the deadline of March 30 fast approaching, it is more than ever important that you make sure you receive the Government's winter fuel payment.

Most of us over 60s get it automatically but if anyone aged 60 or over on or before 26 September 2004 has not received it, they should make a claim right away. People who were 80 or over may also be eligible for a further £100 and there is also a one-off payment of £100 to most households with someone aged 70 or over. Again, most people will have received this extra money with their winter fuel payment.

Anyone who hasn't received this money must contact the Winter Fuel Payment Centre on 029 20 428 106 or the helpline 08459 15 15 15 before 30 March.

It is hard to believe that there could be 30,000 people out there not getting the winter fuel cash which goes to some 12 million people aged over 60. This is because while pensioners get the money automatically, men aged 60-64 who are still working will not get it unless they claim.

How important is it? Well, there is expected to be at least 18% more deaths among the elderly this winter than in other months of the year - a higher number even than countries such as Finland and Denmark with lower temperatures.

Age Concern says that almost 2.4 million people live in homes that are cold enough to cause illness. If you know of anyone like that - and they are aged over 60 and on a qualifying benefit - then they might be entitled to free insulation and heating to make their home warmer. Call the warm front team free on 0800 952 0600.

**Charis Grants Ltd 01733 330732
awards grants to British Gas and EDF
Energy customers most in need to help
them reduce or clear energy debts.**

.....Olivia Calling.....

Sitting here on another freezing cold evening and waiting for the tulips in my window boxes to dare and make themselves visible, my thoughts turn to Spring, with longer daylight hours, the promise of warmer weather and sunnier smiles on the faces of passers-by.



I have now joined the steering group for the Walk for Health initiative, which aims to introduce the benefits of regular walking to 240 Enfield residents over the next 12 months and the Forum will be

supporting this project with Peter Shukla as our walks coordinator. **Peter Shukla** can be contacted on 020 8363 5693.

So get walking - get talking with your friends and family as follows:

- Jubilee Park, access via Hadleigh or Galliard Roads, meet community building, ~Tuesdays 9.30 am.
- Ponders End recreation ground, High Street, meet at the bandstand Tuesdays 10am
- Broomfield Park, park ranger's office Wednesdays 10.30 am.
- Town Park, Cecil Road, main entrance opp.library Thursdays 2pm.
- Pymmes Park, Silver Street, Edmonton meet at visitor centre Fridays 2pm.
- Whitewebbs Park, Beggars Hollow off Clay Hill meet at car park Saturdays 2pm.
- Forty Hall, Forty Hill meet at car park Saturdays 2.30 pm.

Finally for all the ladies out there: Adding to the above walking opportunities, these social walks, for women and their families (includes male partners, family members, children and dogs on leads!)

- Sunday 2nd April 2pm Meet outside Waltham Abbey for a circular walk to include the Old Town, Abbey Gardens and part of the Lea Valley Park.
- Sunday 1st May 2pm. Forty Hall. meet in main car park.
- Sunday 5th June 2pm. Cheshunt Gravel Pits. meet at Pindar Car Park near Cheshunt BR station.
- Sunday 3rd July. 2pm. Epping Forest. meet in car park near coffee hut.
- Sunday 7th August. Coach trip. Call Enfield Women's Centre for details.
- Sunday 4th September. 2pm. Trent Park. meet outside cafeteria.
- Sunday 2nd October 2pm. Forty Hall. meet in main car park.

Contact Barbara or Ginnie, Enfield Women's Centre on 0208 351 9128 or 0208 443 1902.

Olivia Goodfellow

The first part of 2005 has given me further opportunities to meet with community groups and further spread the Forum's name in Enfield. It never ceases to amaze me how much more work there is to do, as many of our Enfield residents are still not aware of the Forum and its place in the community.

A special event is planned for August 2005 which will be the first time our Forum has hosted such an important day. Lonely and vulnerable residents in the Borough are being invited to come and have a one day local holiday extravaganza to brighten up their lives and forge new friendships and contacts. 50 places are available and although in the early stages of planning, I would be happy to receive offers of help, no matter how small, from members who can assist in the delivery of this "Urban holiday". The basic idea is for our guests to enjoy a day of entertainment, good food, games, socialising and fun. Watch this space for more details.

I have attended an information and training day about the National Service Framework for Older People, which aims to enlighten us about the standards being set and the work being done in older people's services both nationally and locally.

The NSF is a comprehensive strategy produced by the Government to seek to ensure accessible, fair, high quality, integrated health and social care services for older people. It sets out a number of standards to be reached, including: Rooting out age discrimination: Person-centred care: Intermediate care: General hospital care: Stroke: Falls: Mental health in older people: Promoting an active healthy life in older age.

The way forward is to have a single assessment process so that various sectors do not repeat the same questions to individuals. Target areas for Enfield to date have been: flu jabs, smoking cessation and healthy living and our Forum has been actively working with the Primary Care Trust in establishing the NSF.

Trust aids Forum.....

We express our most sincere thanks to the Old Enfield Charitable Trust which has agreed to donate £900 to the Forum to support two projects. We intend to use £500 to subsidise the cost of a coach trip and £400 for the production of publicity and display material which we hope will lead to an expansion in our membership.

The Trust owns the Market Place which dates back to 1618 and operates Enfield Market and car park. It uses income raised from market rents to provide grants for people in need and grants for community projects such as ours.

and so does the Council

In addition to giving us the much appreciated free use of the Civic Centre for our Forum and Committee meetings, we have this year received £300 from the Council as a one-off administrative support contribution for the Forum.

Computer training at Ordnance Road

Free computer facilities and a 12-week training course for people with visual and hearing impairments is available at the Sir Jules Thorn Centre, based at Ordnance Road library. The terminals can be used for word processing and other Microsoft office applications, as well as the internet.

Anyone can drop in or pre-book to use the computers. or register your interest in learning computer skills. Or you can contact the trainer by phone. Call Mrs Yvonne Tomey, specialist learning support assistant 020 8379 1725/6.

Geoff's Goal

Forum member Geoff Robinson would be happy to organise a tour of the Arsenal football stadium in May/June of this year. The tour includes access to the whole stadium with a guide and chances to see trophies, strips and other memorabilia. There are deals for groups and senior citizens and as the stadium is only going to stand for another few months, this is a great opportunity to catch a piece of local history before it vanishes. Interested members please contact Geoff on 0208 807 7694.

Mayor launches London's best PE deal

Mayor of Enfield, Councillor John Egan and the Mayoress Mrs Therese Egan, will on Wednesday 30 March launch London's best, most attractive and innovative "new deal" aimed at encouraging more older people to use the Borough's Leisure Centres - to exercise more and so have a better chance of living longer with a better quality longer life.

Working in partnership with our Forum, the Leisure Centres Trust will from April 1 be slashing its gym and swim charges for people aged over 60, with special discounts exclusively for Forum members aged over 50.

In addition to the 50% cut in the price of the energy discount card - now £10 a year for people over 60, all Forum members over 50 will for the first time be able to get the card for only £5 - a saving of £15 on the full price. It will be valid for admission and membership across all ELCT centres and can now be used with the monthly swim pass valid any time and any day for £17 for over 60s.

The Leisure Centres Trust has established an all-day Wednesday session at Southbury and on Thursday at Edmonton Green offering swim, sauna, pilates, yoga, short mat bowls, table tennis, racket sports and lunch for £4.10.

The new charges and improved membership arrangements for the over 60s will make accessing Enfield's four Aspire Health and Fitness suites much more affordable. For example, the fitness membership fee is being cut 60% from £30 a year to £12 and access to the gym will cost £3.20 per session instead of £5.70 - and that includes a bonus of a free swim.

The current £36 a month gym and swim pass will be cut to £27 for Forum members and the annual fee will be reduced from £360 to £270 - bringing the

monthly charge down to £22.50. If you use the fitness facilities more than seven times a month, the price is even lower!

In return for these concessions, the Forum has undertaken to do everything possible to increase the membership of the leisure centres, their income and cash flow to make them more viable and possibly less reliant on a Council subsidy.

We have argued that the leisure centres are a community asset that must be utilised to the full by offering facilities that older people can afford. The Leisure Centres Trust has met our challenge head on. Now it is down to us to fulfil our side of the bargain by getting more people through their turnstiles.

This is not just in our own interest. It is in the interest of everyone who sees the leisure centres as an essential preventative service - helping to prevent older people declining prematurely into ill health.

Faced with worldwide medical evidence that regular physical activity can reduce the risk of major killer diseases such as cancer, coronary heart diseases and diabetes, we have been working with the Leisure Centres to devise an affordable, something-for-everyone programme that can have a major impact on health standards in Enfield.

It is estimated that there are around 30,000 deaths a year from heart disease, diabetes and cancer attributable to the effects of being overweight, which can in turn reduce life expectancy by around nine years.

If you haven't seen the facilities at our Leisure Centres, we invite you to come along to the Mayor's launch of the "new deal" at 10.30 am on Wednesday 30 March at Southbury Leisure Centre, Southbury Road. Bring your gear - and have a try-out!

Mayor urges Seniors to "Get Fit for a Longer Life"

Visit our website Join the Forum

www.enfieldover50sforum.org.uk
Everything you need to know about the Forum can be found on our website. You can even pick up an application to join there. Alternatively you can contact development officer Olivia Goodfellow 020 8447 8841.

LATE BREAKING NEWS

Free bus travel anywhere in Scotland and anytime of the day starts next year for pensioners and disabled people. The Scottish Parliament has voted the money for the next two years, which means that Scotland now joins Wales and Northern Ireland in having free, cross-boundary bus travel.

We expect our three MPs to press the Government to introduce the same concession for pensioners and disabled people in England.

See: free dental check-ups, page 6