

Enfield Borough Over 50s Forum



Annual Report

for

the year ending 31 March 2010

presented to the Forum's annual general meeting

held at the Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield

Tuesday 27 April 2010





The Forum Committee 2009

***Forum Committee 2009/10**

Chair	<i>Irene Richards</i>
Secretary	<i>Tony Watts</i>
Vice Chairs	<i>Roy Barrows, Peter Shukla</i>
Treasurer	<i>Champak Mistry</i>
Campaigns leader	<i>Monty Meth</i>
Membership secretary	<i>Joyce Pullen</i>
Social secretary	<i>Roddy Beare,</i>
Members:	<i>Heather Cole</i>
	<i>Vincent Konyeaso</i>
	<i>Adeyinka Popoola</i>
	<i>Jenny Read</i>
	<i>Peter Smith</i>
	<i>Bill Thear</i>

** All of the above members are trustees of the charity*

Co-optees	<i>Mavis Whyser (Age Concern)</i>
	<i>Demos Demitrou</i>

Social Committee

Roy Barrows
Roddy Beare
Heather Cole
Clara Djondo
Olivia Goodfellow
Jennett Jardin
Jean Mittins
Jacky Pearce
Irene Richards
Sue Scott
Bill Thear

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Annual Report 2009/10 — Introduction

Last year's Annual Report described the previous year as a "great leap forward". This year has been one of consolidation – we have maintained our membership at or above 3,000: a demonstration of the value local older people place upon the Forum and what it provides. Our affiliates, local older people organisations, now number 55. This membership base has been built on solid and dedicated work, not the least by the retiring Chair, Monty Meth MBE. We pay a heartfelt tribute to his 9 years as Chair, his inspiration, dedication and untiring application to making the Forum the force it now is and in continuing to make an invaluable contribution.

Taking over from him as Chair and maintaining the momentum was never going to be easy but has been made much easier by the support of the Executive Committee, in particular, Tony Watts our Secretary who has been a tower of strength, Joyce Pullen, Membership Secretary and our Development Officer, Polly Lawman who have worked very hard during the year

Organising our many of our activities is demanding and in this we are fortunate to be able to count on a good volunteer base of members, but we could still do with more. However, even organising volunteers takes time and the committee has been working to utilise members' skills and to understand what they can do. "Ask not what your Forum can do for you but what you can do for your Forum". There is little that gives more satisfaction than making a positive contribution.

In order to fulfil our charitable remit, we organise monthly meetings for members on matters that are topical, interesting and stimulating. We organised the highly successful Healthy Lifestyles event at the Edmonton Leisure Centre and take a major role in the annual Falls Prevention event. A continuing campaign is for less expensive or free access to leisure facilities believing that the best preventative medicine is keeping fit and out of the hands of the medical profession. Our Social Committee organises a wide range of activities intended to get people up and about and to alleviate isolation. Also, led by Monty Meth, we continue to campaign on local issues that concern local older residents and which affect our quality of life. We have lobbied MPs, MEPs, MLAs, the local authority, the NHS and others where we feel member's interests are involved.

Forum interests reach out into the community, as shown by our participation in the recent Edmonton Carnival. There is also a European dimension in the Twinning Project, led by Tony Watts involving Enfield's "twins" in Courbevoie, France; Gladbeck, Germany; and Halandri, Greece.

The Poetry Group, lead by David Oliver, continues to flourish and we have become the first Forum in the country to publish a volume of original poems by its members. "Poetry Lines" has already sold more than 300 copies and was received "with interest" by Sir Andrew Motion, former Poet Laureate. This project is an example of what older people can do with the minimum of support; in this case free use of space in a local library. More opportunities like this should be provided. Keeping "the little grey cells" working is a vital component in the general health of older people. Local libraries, and other public buildings should be free for use by local groups who fill the gaps left by the withdrawal of concessionary fees by local F.E. colleges. This was caused as government switched funding from lifelong learning to vocational or employment qualifications and away from the leisure learning of older people.

Older people are not a homogenous group to be lumped together. Politicians, social scientists and the media sometimes forget that our lives and needs are as diverse as there are people. We must constantly remind them of this – we are not a "burden" but a huge resource to nurture and to call on should they have the imagination to do so.



Forum poets, David Blake, Doris Martin & David Oliver launching Poetry Lines composed entirely by Forum members

Forum meetings

Throughout the year we have run three meetings a month: the main meeting at the Civic Centre; a less formal meeting at Skinners Court; and a third at either Millfield House or Forest Road Clinic.

Our meetings programme attracted many excellent speakers and ranged over topics such as: Dementia, osteoporosis, London's Ambulance Service, Enfield's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, genealogy, Enfield & WWI, the Evergreen Centre, pavements, wheelie bins, lifelong learning, safety in Enfield, United Nations Association, rogue traders, leisure & culture, town winning, an introduction to computers, Parkinson's disease, campaigning for a better deal for pensioners, care provision in an ageing society.

Our Freedom Pass trips and days out included visits to Spitalfields, the London Eye, Capel Manor, the Emirates stadium, Forty Hall, London Museum & Docklands, a work out session at the newly equipped green gym in Elsing Park and kayaking with the Edmonton Canoe Club. For the more adventurous members there were trips to Althorp, Holland, Bonn and Paris. In between members were able to wine and dine through social committee organised lunches in Turkish and Indian restaurants and at Southgate College. The final end of year flourish was a bumper Christmas lunch and a bouncing Xmas disco. Other popular events included a quiz evening, a visit to the Magic Circle, a Gilbert and Sullivan evening out and Forum members supporting the ever improving Southgate Symphony Orchestra.



By way of promoting the Forum we helped with the organisation of the **'Don't trip get fit'** day at Southbury Leisure Centre; we joined forces with Ruth Winston House at the Enfield Show in September 2009; and in March 2010 took part in the Edmonton Carnival. In all this has proven to be our most ambitious and successful programme ever and enjoyable for those that have taken part.



The Forum in session in the Civic Centre's chamber

Campaigning

The year ending 31 March 2010 saw the Forum register some notable campaigning successes while, at the same time, highlighting new and important areas of work that still need to be tackled. While we support many national campaigns, such as the reform of council tax, improved pensions, uprating the weekly 25p Age Addition for 80-year-olds and the £10 Christmas bonus unaltered since 1971 and 1972 respectively, we realise that we can have more influence with the local authority and local statutory bodies such as NHS Enfield if we take up issues of real concern to the people we aim to represent.

Undoubtedly, our biggest success was in securing Enfield Council support for a review of its pavement repair budget and policy which will result in a 60% increase in repairs on an annual and continuing basis and which will, we hope, lead to a drop in the number of trips and falls experienced by many residents - and particularly by older people.

Our thanks are due to all members and friends of the Forum who supported our "make pavements a priority" petition which more than 6,000 people signed and we only halted when the Council called us in to discuss details of its new approach.

More pavement defects will in future be repaired every month than ever before. Council officers agreed to re-negotiate the repairs contract so that 400 more footway defects will be dealt with every month. And a new rapid response team will have a seven-day deadline and is expected to handle 280 extra repairs every month. This is in addition to the 24 hours emergency repairs team and the 28-day repairs team.

The Forum has been assured that more than 27,000 pavement repairs will be treated in a full



11 Nov 2009 lead story on the Forum's pavements campaign

year, compared with 9,432 dealt with in 2005/6 and nearly 17,000 in 2008/9 - which roughly equates to a 60% increase in 2010/11.

Council officers have assured the Forum that they will now be spending £350,000 a year on pavement repairs which is an increase of 140% over the figure given to the Forum when we launched the safer pavements campaign. But we realise that even with the increase there will still be much to do to make up for the long years of under investment by successive administrations. We are, at least, starting to break the log-jam and it will be important for Forum members to notify council officers of areas that need attention. At the same time we will continue to contest the arbitrary 25mm pavement gap before a repair is warranted set by the insurance companies.

One lesson we can draw from this campaign is that our Forum can be the vehicle for real change if it combines with our affiliates and friends such as the Enfield Ecumenical Partnership of Churches to present a powerful case to the Council and other decision-makers in the Borough.

Toilets

Our second successful campaign has seen the number of participating businesses in the community toilet scheme (CTS) increase from 14 to 25 in the last year and we are now working in partnership with the Council to reach 30 and to make more people aware of the scheme.



Forum members enjoying a day with Edmonton Canoe Club



Edmonton's MP, Andy Love opened the Forum's Healthy Lifestyles taster day at Edmonton Leisure Centre which was attended by 186 older people

It is as a result of this partnership working that the Council produced a public information leaflet on the scheme and we have made a number of additional suggestions regarding improved signage, which we hope to see implemented in the coming year.

The CTS is a classic example of how a Forum initiative secured local Council support, leading to improved amenities for the community. We recognised that there was virtually no chance of the cash-pressed council reinstating the public conveniences manned by attendants of years gone by - a view upheld by the Select Committee of MPs - but that we could secure an improvement if we advocated a local CTS scheme under which the Council pays businesses to open their toilets to the public without proof of purchase.

Health

The Forum is now working under the fourth management change at the top of the Primary Care Trust (now renamed NHS Enfield) in the last three years which has also involved personnel changes at every level of the organisation which has made it extremely difficult to achieve results in areas of concern to the Forum.

The Forum is represented on various NHS groups set up to advise management, but it has to be said that progress is at times painfully slow in some areas of concern which will, we think, only improve with greater senior management continuity and involvement.

We think, for example, that if the NHS top management had used their status, power and influ-

ence with Transport for London we would have seen some improvement by now in the 307 bus service access to Barnet Hospital, which has been an issue for some years. Similarly, it seems inconceivable that so much time and money can be expended in modernising the North Middlesex University Teaching Hospital in Edmonton and so little time and money spent on enabling patients in the west of the Borough to take advantage of the new advanced health services.

To now be told that TfL does not take into account access to public health services when planning its routes is a damning comment on the various tiers of NHS management and the Forum will clearly need to be more forceful on this and other issues in the coming year such as making toenail cutting facilities available to more older people.

Lifelong Learning

We noted in the 2008/9 annual report our failure to make any headway in overcoming the loss of lifelong learning opportunities in local colleges following the withdrawal of concessionary fees to older people. We again had numerous discussions with the principals at Enfield College and the Learning & Skills Council and although we were stymied at every turn by national policy putting the emphasis on training young people for work, we did secure an important breakthrough.

Thanks to support from Dr Ben Charles, head of LBE's Community and Adult Service we were able to inaugurate a series of computer training courses and also continue with our Skinners Court and other educational meetings in various parts of the Borough - and we hope that this cooperation will continue in the coming year.

Paul Everett, Manager at Millfield House, talking to members at an east of the borough coffee morning



Finance

The year saw Champak Mistry elected as Treasurer of the Forum and through his expertise and efforts the executive committee now receives monthly management updates giving us confidence that our finances are in good hands. Subscriptions received during the year were almost £18K but this includes members subscribing for 2 year plus a number of new life members so that subscription income for the new financial year is expected to be significantly down. Multiple year and life member subscriptions have the benefit of considerable saving on the administration costs. Grants and donations were just over £28K and we thank the Trusts and other organisations that have supported us during the year. The grant we received from City Bridge Trust of £10K a year for the past 2 years has now come to an end and unless we can significantly increase our income it means that our reserves will be spent within 2-3 years. The Forum's policy for trips and holidays is that these should be self supporting and as the end of year accounts show some £30K went through our books and inflated our income to almost £80K. Our accounts showed a surplus on the year of £7K which reduces to around £3K when forward liabilities are taken into account.

The three major expenditure items in running the Forum are our two part-time staff, the newsletter and the cost of running the office. Altogether these items equate to about £35K. In the minds of committee members there is no doubt that the excellence of the newsletter and the support that our paid staff can give to members and the range of meetings, trips and events has been the key to the popularity of the Forum among older people and the Forum's growth and effectiveness within the Borough.



Night out - Turkish cuisine at the Samdan Meze Bar & Grill

Fundraising

Fundraising is constantly in our thoughts – without the extra money we raise through various charitable foundations e.g. City Bridge Trust, which enabled us to employ our Development Officer and an Administrative Assistant, the Forum would be almost impossible to run. Recognition must also be given to Stennett & Stennett for their financial help. We would like to thank Council for allowing us use of the Council Chamber and committee rooms at the Civic Centre. Also, our thanks to Officers for giving of their time. However, unlike other councils in the country, for example Haringey who give their forum an estimated £56,000 p.a., it makes no financial contribution to further our work much of which underpins the aim of a better Enfield. Many of our meetings provide a platform for Council consultations and dissemination of vital information, as does our widely appreciated Newsletter. We hope Councillors and Council Officers understand the cost and voluntary effort involved in the management of an organisation the size of the Forum – one of the largest in the country – and the contribution the Forum makes to community cohesion.

As a charity we can benefit if members who pay UK Income or capital gains tax, sign a "Gift Aid" declaration which allows us to claim an extra 28% on top of their membership subscription (£1.68 in the case of individual members). Some 900 members have already signed up and we will shortly be submitting a claim to HMRC for a refund of over £2000.

The annual subscription level has remained the same for the past three years. In view of rising costs, including recent higher postage rates from April this year, the Executive has recommended a small increase to be effective from 2011.





The Forum carried the banner at the Edmonton Carnival

Partnership

Many Forum members play an active role in working with the Council, Police, Pensions Service, National Health Service and other statutory bodies through the Enfield Strategic Partnership and other voluntary organisations within the Borough. Committee members Monty Meth, Irene Richards, Peter Smith, Demetri St Andrew, Champak Mistry, Joyce Pullen and Tony Watts represent the Forum on a variety of committees in support of the older community. Yusuf Gulamhusein represents us on the Primary Care Trust Equality and Diversity Board and is a committee member of the Indian 50+ Association; Des Hegarty is a member of the PCT's coronary and heart disease local implementation

group; and David Oliver is a member of the NHS Enfield pandemic Flu Communications Group.

The Forum has excellent relationships with other groups across the Borough and in this year we signed up our 55 affiliate organisation. During the year Polly Lawman organised a very useful 'affiliates day' at which we discussed how we can work better together for the benefit of our members. Polly will be arranging regular meetings with our affiliates to cover issues of mutual interest and in particular communications, publicity and advertising of their respective organisations through our newsletter, eNews and website.

LBE's Twinning Officer, Eleanor Hunter together with Forum Secretary, Tony Watts, submitted a successful proposal to the European Community for a study to compare and contrast older peoples' support and services in three of the Towns Enfield is twinned with – Gladbeck, Courbevoie and Hallandri. 47,000 Euros has been awarded to allow steering committees drawn from each community to undertake the study. Part of the study will include a major conference to be held in Strasbourg at the European Parliament and culminate with a second conference to be held in Enfield in 2011. The intention is that after the conclusion of the study there will be an ongoing interchange of ideas and activities among older people from the four communities.



Forum members enjoying the sights of Paris led by Olivia Goodfellow



Fitness day March 2010 - short mat bowls

Future direction

Our strategy continues to be one of working within the wider community in order to try to improve the quality of life of older people.

Priorities are:

- Fundraising
- Hold more meetings, particularly in the east of the borough
- Increase membership among our diverse communities
- Get more members involved in running the Forum
- Strengthening our partnership with the new Enfield Leisure Centre management to ensure that more older people are encouraged to improve and sustain their fitness levels
- Keep lifelong learning high on the agenda
- No let up on widening the Toilet scheme
- Holding statutory authorities to account for what they do or not do for older people

The Forum's objectives are to:

- Make life better for older people in Enfield
- Ensure we are consulted in all decisions involving older people
- Provide information on matters vital to older people

- Have informative and interesting speakers at out monthly meetings
- Organise events and opportunities for members to socialise
- Campaign against discrimination and injustice
- Influence national and local government and other statutory bodies on matters affecting older people such as pensions, council tax, health, crime, education, leisure, etc.
- Work in partnership with local, regional and national organisations in support of the above objectives.

This is my first annual report after taking over from Monty. As I said at the start, he has left the Forum in a good state of health. Again, my thanks to all who have helped me in the past year.

Irene Richards

Chair April 2010

APPENDIX I

Forum Affiliated Organisations

Ajex	Housing 21
Armfield Pensioners Club	Leigh Hunt Drive Neighbourhood Watch
Arnos Grove Townswomen's Guild	Macular Disease Society (Enfield Group)
Arthritis Care-Edmonton	Meet a Need with Christian Care
BHP Residents Assoc.	Naree Shakti (Asian Womens Strength)
Bounces Rd Area Neighbourhood Watch	Nightingale Community Hospice Trust
Bramley Bowls Club, Cockfosters	Oakwood Horticultural Society
Church Street Residents Association	Over 50 Bangladeshi Society
Club 60 Plus	Polish Community in Enfield
Club Terza ETA	Probus Club of Enfield
Cockfosters Bowling Club	Ruth Winston Hoise
Community & Environment Project Office	Salvation Army Sunshine Club
Community Aid	Selborne Bowling Club
Cypriot Elderly & Disabled Group Enfield	Silver Threads Senior Citizens Group
Eastern Enfield Good Neighbours	Southgate Bowling Club
Edmonton Bowls Club	Southgate & Enfield Friendship Centre
Ellenborough Table Tennis Club	Southgate Opera Group
Elsinge Monday Club	Southgate Symphony Orchestra
Enfield & Southgate Workers Educational Association	Southgate Weld Lawn Tennis Club
Enfield Asian Welfare Association	St Thomas (Oakwood) Golden Link Club
Enfield Caribbean Association	Stroke Action
Enfield Croquet Club	The Ladies Thursday Club
Enfield Diabetes Support Group	The Royal Air Forces Association (Enfield)
Enfield Unison Retired Members Assoc	Winchmore Hill Bowls Club
Enfield Writers Workshop	Winchmore Hill Community Care
Enfield Video Makers	Winchmore Hill Folk Dance Club
First Tuesdays Ladies Group	Winchmore Hill Lunch Club
Heart Throbs	

“Enfield has Over 80,000 over 50s half of whom are retired”

APPENDIX II

ENFIELD BOROUGH OVER 50S FORUM

(Registered Charity number 1122859)

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT for the year ended 31st March 2010.

RECEIPTS		
	Note	£
Subscriptions	1	17,880
Grants and donations	2	28,290
Poetry lines	3	901
Events and raffles:		
Current year	4	6,779
Year 2010/11		269
Trips:		
Current year	5	23,001
Year 2010/11		2,807
	£	79,927

PAYMENTS

Staff salaries and NIC		19,065
Printing		5,708
Postage and delivery	6	6,090
Stationery		1,464
Telephone		553
Travel		89
Office rent and hall hire		3,517
Miscellaneous expenses		1,034
Donations - Cumbria		63
Poetry Lines	3	1,125
Events:		
Current year	4	6,225
Year 2010/11		301
Trips:		
Current year	5	24,665
Year 2010/11		2,899
		<hr/>
		72,797

Net of receipts	7,130
Cash funds 1st April 2009	38,446

Cash Funds 31st March 2010	£	45,576
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STATEMENT OF ASSETS

Bank Balances - Barclays	30,747
Bank of Scotland	14,829
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	45,576

Notes to the Accounts

- 1 Subscriptions - Includes significant amounts received for 2010/11 and from life members.
- 2 Grants and donations - major donors and contributors
City Bridge House Trust
Metropolitan Police
London Borough of Enfield
Enfield PCT
Enfield Leisure
Stennett & Stennett
- 3 Poetry lines - There are a substantial number of books in stock.
- 4 Events completed during the year including income received for these events in 2008/9 showed a surplus of £1,426.00
- 5 Trips completed during the year including income received for these trips in 2008/9 showed a surplus of £469.00
- 6 Postage includes stamps of £3,750 purchased on 24th March 2010 for use during 2010/11.

This statement of Receipts and Payments and Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31st march 2010 prepared by:

Champak Mistry, FCCA.
12th April 2010.

This statement of Receipts and Payments and Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31st march 2010 was Independently Examined by:

Jeff Rodin B.Soc.Sc (Jt Hons)
Independent Examiner
24th April 2010

ENFIELD BOROUGH



“The Forum publishes its 12 page newsletter 6 times a year and distributes 7000 copies of each issue. Over 2500 copies are posted to members and the balance is distributed to affiliate organisations supporting older people, libraries and GP surgeries and some supermarkets. It is Enfield’s key publication for communicating with the over 50s.”

