



New Strategy for Older People is Coming - at last!



Five years ago, when I first became involved with the Forum, we were asked to

comment on a draft Council strategy for older people drawn up by the then social services assistant director. There was clearly little commitment or interest by either her fellow officers or councillors and despite our vigorous support and enthusiasm, the project was killed. Suddenly it is all change at the Civic Centre.

The officers now have their own high-powered Older People's Project Board, chaired by Mark McLaughlin, director of finance and corporate services, who is also the new LBE link officer with the Forum; Cllr John Boast has been appointed the new LBE Older People's champion; and the Council itself has commissioned work on a new Strategy for Older People.

I'd like to think that the time and effort put in by Forum members, and the many other groups in the Borough working on behalf of older people, has led to Council leaders on both sides of the political spectrum seeing the light. The truth is that the Audit Commission and other independent but Government-backed bodies are putting pressure on

our Council and others to demonstrate how they are bringing older people in from the cold and recognise they have a role to play to make better local communities in which they can thrive.

So we heartily welcome the speed and energy being displayed by Council officers and pledge once again our full support for any and every initiative that gives older people a stronger voice - and one that will be listened to and consulted - not frustratingly ignored as we still too often are.

And before the strategy gets off the ground, Councillors ought to be aware it is going to cost them money. They cannot forever rely on the goodwill of volunteers to staff and administer bodies such as the Forum which we claim has done more than its fair share in alerting older people to the need to "get fit for a longer life". And with our unique Home Safety Audit and leisure centre events, helping people to live in a safer and accident free environment.

So there's a lot happening during what I hope will be a lovely summer. Keep the new members rolling - we're now over 350 strong - and together we will make life better for everyone.

Monty Meth

Chair

Forthcoming FORUM Events

At the Civic Centre, Silver Street
Tuesday 26 July 10am for 10.30 start

Diabetes: How to enjoy healthy, tasty food

Speaker: Dietitian **Karlien Coerteze**
Haringey Teaching Primary Care Trust
and

Rev **Tony Peters**, director Enfield Peace Alliance

speaking on **the Week of Peace**

Tuesday 19 July 10.30 - 3.30pm

National Falls Awareness Day

At Southbury Leisure Centre
Southbury Road

Occupational therapy, physio-therapy, strength and balance exercises and much more to help reduce falls, fractures and injuries to older people.

Admission free. Lunch included.

PLEASE NOTE
The different dates & venues

Friday 5 August 2pm -6pm

Elders Friendship Day

Friends Meeting House

61 Church Hill, Winchmore Hill

Tues 30 Aug 10 am for 10.30 start

Enfield's new strategy for older people - your chance to have your say

Enfield County School, Holly Walk, Enfield Town, opposite the Civic Centre via Church Lane.

Fighting '40s in Forty Hall

The 60th anniversary of the end of World War 2 is being commemorated at a Forty Hall exhibition which includes a display of life as lived in Enfield in the 1940s. The exhibition is open from Wednesday to Sunday from 11am to 4pm until 24 July. Admission is free.

The display of memorabilia includes army uniforms, household items and everyday clothes of the period together with an original Anderson air-raid shelter and displays from long gone local industries such as a Lee Enfield Rifle from the Royal Small Arms factory. The exhibition also covers the role of women and the life of children during the war and is a reminder to both older people and today's youth of Britain's proud role in the defeat of fascism.

A national commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the end of World War was held on Sunday 10 July 2005 and all over the country veterans who served in the armed forces, their relatives and friends recalled with pride the sacrifice and service given by so many so that we and our children and grandchildren can live in peace and freedom.

Victory Day Request

Forum member **Harold Brawn-Meek** included the following poem '**Victory Day Request**' in his '**Duty - Courage - Medals poetry collection**'.

Go, watch for us the voices whispered
be our eyes in the great parade
we who are resting beneath the earth
would like to feel we marched this day.

So go and tell them we are not
saddened if, maybe, we lie forgotten,
duty called, we answered and fell
but noble freedom still prevails.
Let them then resound the skies
in lusty joy that we can hear.

Go, watch for us is all we ask
that's not much to request,
for only you can tell and show
them what it costs to win.
Take down the medals from the wall,
go forth and and face the joyful crowds
they will not notice the awful
scars, on this their heroes' day.

10 good things about being Over 50

1. We have the Freedom Pass
 2. You can travel more easily during term-time at school
 3. No more exams - unless you are a mature student
 4. Enjoy the expressions on the faces of the fit and young when you beat them to a seat on the bus
 5. No worries about school league tables
 6. If you have to be ill, free prescription charges
 7. You can snooze in the afternoon, sex if you're lucky
 8. If you're a lady you are old enough to have a toy boy
 9. If you're an older man, younger women think they are safe with you but they could be wrong!
 10. A £200 tax free winter fuel allowance per household without a means test
- (with acknowledgements to SAGA magazine)*

Random Round-Up

Forum secretary Tony Watts has been named the first Older People's Champion by the important Enfield Strategic Partnership (ESP). The Partnership brings together all the powerful and significant decision-makers in the Borough such as the Council, Primary Care Trust, police, the learning and skills council, Middlesex University, local businesses and the voluntary sector who are all working together to make Enfield "one of the best places to live, work, study and do business".

Help for war widows. The Government has announced that war widows are to get more financial help to visit the graves of their husbands abroad, The Ministry of Defence will cover the full cost of one visit to a war cemetery, together with some carer's costs. For more information call 01622 716 729.

Warnings are going out from the Council that rubbish for collection left on the pavement is both unsightly and illegal, which could lead to a maximum £2,500 fine. Any queries call 8379 1000 and ask for refuse/ recycling.

Enfield's Community Alarm Service manager Elaine Gibson is working on plans to get our share of the £80m earmarked by Chancellor Gordon Brown to equip 160,000

homes with upgraded technology so that more older people can live independent and safer lives.

New technology has developed many clever things to give people greater freedom and reduce anxiety for friends and families of people living on their own. For example, there is now a falls machine which alerts the community alarm service without them having to be called because the alarm detects a sudden change of movement, Gas can be detected and so can overflowing water if you are locked in the bathroom. Dogs can even be trained to press a dog-friendly button and alert the emergency services.

Some 200 local people are being invited to test a wide range of equipment in consultation with social services, the PCT and Community Alarms so that the right technology is available for the benefit of as many people as possible. Call 020 8379 6509 for more details

Free Computer taster sessions for people with sight and hearing problems are being held at Ordnance Road Library during Make a Noise in Libraries Week - July 11 -15 (but not Wednesday). The hope is that after a "taster" you will put your name down for the free 12 week course. Contact Yvonne Tomey 020 8379 1725 for details.

Enfield: Facts and Figures

Enfield Strategic Partnership (ESP) was established in 2001 and brings together leaders and decision-makers from key organisations in the Borough such as the Council, voluntary organisations and local industry to work together “to make Enfield one of the best places to live, work, study and do business”. Forum secretary Tony Watts is a member of the ESP board representing older people.

The third review of the Enfield Strategic Partnership's work includes the following facts and figures:

- * Enfield Council was established in 1965 following the merger of three councils which covered Edmonton, Ponders End, Enfield Town and Southgate
- * About 40% of the Borough is Green Belt land and subject to stringent restrictions
- * Enfield is the fifth largest Borough in London in population with 283,000 residents and this is expected to reach 295,000 by 2014
- * Ethnic minority communities make up some 40% of the population with the largest Cypriot and the third largest Turkish communities in the country
- * 46,000 people - 17% of Enfield's population - are estimated to live in poverty mainly in the East of the Borough. This ranks the Borough in the worst fifth in England
- * In child poverty, Enfield ranks 39 out of 354 local authorities
- * Enfield is in the top 12% of authorities in England and Wales for population density and in the worst 6% for overcrowded housing
- * Despite the 1980s recession, the Borough remains one of London's major centres of manufacture and distribution and is in the top 10% of most profitable areas to do business
- * During 2003, 195 people were killed or seriously injured on Enfield's roads
- * The top six priorities for improvement indicated in a survey of Enfield residents were: the level of crime, clean streets, road and pavement repairs, health services, level of traffic congestion and activities for teenagers.

Forum member Brian Wright attended the Council Cabinet meeting that considered the final scrutiny panel report on fairer home care charging - and came away disappointed. Brian was a co-opted member of the panel along with representatives of Enfield Voluntary Action, Age Concern, Enfield Asian Welfare and the Alzheimer's Society.

In 2002, the Government issued its fairer charging policy guidance under which users of social care services make a contribution towards the costs, with each council adopting its own criteria. In Enfield, the social services scrutiny panel decided to review our local system and the impact increased charges had on vulnerable people following concerns raised by users of the service.

Despite the plea from Brian and others, the Council is going ahead and increasing the hourly social care charge by 45p to £14.10. Of the other North London boroughs only Barnet is raising its hourly charge by 30p to £12.80 and as Enfield was already the highest charging borough in the area, they have now widened the disparity gap.

“I fear the principle of fairness has been overthrown by a desire to balance the books”, says Brian. “But it is not all totally bad news as the Council has agreed with our claim that a maximum weekly charge should be introduced for the 2006-7 financial year - but we do not yet know what it is going to be.

“We also pressed for charges to be reviewed every year and that comparisons should be made with charges of neighbouring boroughs and that people who used the services of more than one carer would only be charged the same hourly rate as those with one carer.

“We also suggested information improvements for service users such as clearer leaflets appealing against charges and making sure that information is available in ethnic minority languages - so our presence along with others from the voluntary sector did make a difference, although not as much as we would have liked”, says Brian Wright.

Wanted 2 Volunteers

At a recent extended committee meeting we identified two positions that need urgent attention.

1. We need a volunteer coordinator between the Forum and our affiliated clubs, so that we can work much closer together for our mutual benefit.

2. We need a volunteer funding coordinator working alongside Forum secretary Tony Watts to identify funding opportunities and then make the necessary applications.

Why not call Tony on 020 886 9125 and join Britain's 17 million-strong army of volunteers?

A thought for today

A vicar called on me the other day, said a Forum member. He said that at my age I ought to start thinking about the hereafter.

I said, Minister, I think about it all the time. No matter where I am, in the lounge, kitchen or going upstairs to the bedroom I keep asking myself: Now what am I here after.

.....and tomorrow

When you were born, you were crying and everyone around you was smiling.

Live your life, so that at the end, you're the one who's smiling and everyone around you is crying.

Unhealthy Facts

In 1995 it was estimated there were 30 million obese people in the world - now it is 300 million.

In the UK, obesity causes 30,000 deaths a year

If current trends continue, half of all UK children will be obese by 2020.

Overheard at the Forum

I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.

The quickest way to double your money is to fold it in half and put it back in your pocket.

2nd Public Health Report - A Bright Future for Enfield

Although differences in health standards between people living in different parts of the Borough remain a major problem for the NHS, male life expectancy increased by four months last year, whilst life expectancy for women stayed the same in Enfield North, Southgate and Edmonton. But there is still a four year difference in life expectancy between men living in Southgate and Edmonton. On average, Enfield's male life expectancy is 77 years and for women it is 81 years.

Ponders End, Lower and Upper Edmonton are the most deprived parts of the Borough and they are among the areas where screening for cervical cancer and 'Flu immunisation is at its lowest. Enfield North has the highest hospital admissions and deaths from coronary heart disease, followed closely by Southgate, and Edmonton has the highest death rates from acute respiratory problems.

These are some of the points made in the comprehensive Enfield public health report 2005-6, the second such

report to be published and which is part of the new on-going programme to improve health and healthcare facilities - A Brighter Future for Enfield - launched by the Primary Care Trust.

The PCTs main strategic theme appears to be one of reducing hospital referrals and admissions by GPs and shifting services - and money - from hospitals to community-based health centres and bigger GP practices which will offer a much broader choice of care facilities.

This could include such services as physiotherapy, podiatry, blood tests and ultimately to dermatology, gynaecology and minor surgery being undertaken locally, rather than using hospitals which could then concentrate on real emergency admissions and serious operations.

Better services in the community will lead to less pressure on A&E departments, more care at home will reduce hospital admissions. This plan will be supported by the introduction of commu-

nity matrons - 17 of them by 2008 - who between them would have a caseload of 1,300 home care patients. Hospital referrals for diabetes will also be cut.

By preventing avoidable admissions to hospital and improving the discharge system, it is also hoped to delay the need for long-term admission to residential care homes. Providing more care services in the home and having a single point of access between the health and social services will, it is hoped, help to improve the quality of life of elderly people - and free A&E departments to concentrate on the patients who really need their specialist skills.

For the patient, the new system of extending primary care services once it is up and running, should see a shorter waiting time to see a specialist, reduced waiting time for medical examinations and a maximum waiting time of 18 weeks from diagnosis to hospital admission. Failure to reach these targets could see our local hospitals losing their accreditation as providers of NHS services.

No Joy from Blunkett

Although the Government recognises that the 25p extra to pensioners on reaching the age of 80 has diminished in value since it was introduced in 1971, there are no plans to change it because "it is contained in legislation and would be time-consuming and, therefore, an inefficient use of resources to remove it". That's the tame and lame excuse offered by Stephen Timms, the Department of Work and Pensions Minister of State, in response to our plea to replace the 25p with something more meaningful.

On its own, the Government accepts that the 25p Age Addition is not the most cost-effective way to help elderly pensioners. Therefore it introduced a series of "better measures to help pensioners with the lowest incomes" such as free TV licences, winter fuel payments and assistance with council tax payments.

We shall reply pointing out that these extra payments are not confined to pensioners with the lowest incomes, but go to everyone. They are not enshrined

in legislation and can, therefore, be changed or discontinued at any time and they do not go to everyone aged over 80 - only to the household where there is a person aged 80 or over.

On our second request that people going abroad for whatever reason should be able to retain their pension credit for longer than the current four weeks, we are told that Government officials have been investigating a range of options for potentially extending the period without it affecting their entitlement.

However, they go on to say that "pension credit is intended to help people whose resources are insufficient to meet their day-to-day living expenses in Great Britain. Therefore, the four-week rule that applies to pension credit has currently been deemed an adequate period of time for which a person can keep their entitlement whilst temporarily abroad".

To shift the Government on this issue we would need some firm evidence of the four-week rule causing hardship when the recipient is abroad which we can then forward to the appropriate quarter.

Thanks Margaret

"Just wanted to send a note to say I have just read the latest forum newsletter. I read it from cover to cover and especially liked the jokes. I also wanted to say congratulations on the increased number of members in the forum. I think this is a wonderful achievement and I know the forum will go from strength to strength representing the real views of older people in the borough. The forum is an important mechanism for bringing people together and getting their voices heard. Congratulations again".

Margaret Allen,

LBE commissioning & strategic manager for older people's services

...did you hear

A Forum member rushed into her doctor's surgery and said "Doctor, doctor I think I've only got 59 seconds to live!" The doctor replied "Just wait a minute and I'll see you!"

Stepping Out in Style Public Toilets: Forum launches survey



..Olivia Calling..

Monday July 11th sees the launch of a weekly walking group in Grovelands Park N21 which I will be leading. The Forum, in partnership with the

LBE Sports Development Team, is keen to encourage local people of all ages to enjoy the park in a safe and secure way. Join the Sunset Steppers from 6.30 - 7.30pm each Monday from July 11th until September 5th and give yourself the opportunity to "Get walking and get talking". The launch walk begins at the café in the park (nearest entrance is Broad Walk). Those who wish can finish the walk at the Woodman pub on Bourne Hill for a cold or hot drink. This walk is suitable for all abilities.

Friends Unite this August

As part of the Forum's aim of reaching out to the vulnerable and isolated in our community, you will recall that in the last newsletter, I outlined the Elders Friendship Day which is being held on August 5th from 2-6pm at the Friends Meeting House in Church Hill, Winchmore Hill, N21.

Publicity is underway to fill the 50 places, entertainment is booked, generous sponsorship from the police has been secured, but one thing is missing....I have only received three offers of help from Forum members, namely Audrey Hardwick, Carole Sivak and Annie Nyamalar. Please look at your diaries and let me know if you can:

Offer to pick up and return elders on the day. Help with preparing sandwiches on the day. Bake a cake for the traditional tea. Help make drinks. Be available at any time to chat informally to guests during the afternoon.

We plan to make this an annual summer event and hope to organise one in December too. But this will only happen if members give a little time to help. So come on, give me a call!

All enquiries on both events to: Olivia on 020 8447 8841 or email olivia.goodfellow@enfieldover50sforum.org.uk

Olivia Goodfellow

The lack of public toilets in the Borough is such a sore point with Forum members and many other people, that we have decided to organise a survey to gauge people's feelings with a view to making all political parties face up to the issue in the coming local elections.

This two-pronged attack was decided by our Forum's toilets sub-group: Myra Godsmark, Frank Hatt, Audrey Hardwick, Madge Jones, Derek Searle and Don Smith and we urge everyone to get cracking on the survey forms and return them to Olivia Goodfellow, 19 Wades Hill, London N21 1BD.

There are some local councils who are proud of the toilet facilities they provide and the money they spend on them. Westminster, for example, tell us they spend £2.5 million a year. Many councils listen to their residents and 76 local authorities are members of the British Toilet Association which campaigns for better public toilets for all - but Enfield is not one them.

Closing public toilets has been the policy of successive administrations in Enfield. Councillors apparently think that people stop needing a toilet because they are working to a tight budget. We know that councils are not legally obliged to provide any public toilets. It is only at their discretion. But they do have powers - seldom if ever exercised - to insist on the provision of public conveniences under section 106 planning obligations for new developments.

The National Consumer Council says that Britain's public lavatories are a "**national disgrace**". They commissioned a survey which found that people wanted toilets to be open longer and to offer better facilities for women and young families.

Few people would agree that our ability to find an "**away from home**" toilet should depend on the whim of a council or a business offering facilities. Isn't it about time that councils, transport operators and all premises dealing with the public had by law to either provide or permit public use of toilet facilities?

We have been actively involved with the VivaCity 2020 London University project which is looking at the design and use of public toilets in places like Enfield. We have now decided to run our own survey because we are disappointed by the lack of forward thinking in dealing with what Mrs Plumb writing to Age Concern calls the breach of her human rights by the lack of public lavatories.

Contrast this with China where the authorities are spending £20 million creating thousands of five-star tourism toilets before they host the 2008 Olympics. Has anyone heard about new toilets being planned for London should Britain win the 2012 Olympic bid?

Please fill in and return our survey form - and get your friends and neighbours to do the same.

The Healthy Bladder Campaign Charity

has sent us 20 printed cards saying:

Just Can't Wait.

The holder of this card has a medical condition which requires the urgent use of a toilet. Please help.

The cards cost £1 and will be available at all Forum meetings.

Join the Forum NOW!

Send a cheque/cash of £4 (individual), £6 (couple) or £10 (for a club) plus your name(s), address, phone and email. Membership runs until March 31 2006.

Cheques and details etc to: Olivia Goodfellow, 19 Wades Hill, N21 1BD. Tel: 020 8447

Forum Fights for £3m Refund

Enfield Council, we are pleased to report, is taking up our case that the Government should pick up the bill for that part of the cost of the Freedom Pass which is currently paid to the bus companies. From April 2006, the Government is paying for free local bus travel for everyone in England and Wales over 60 and all people with disabilities, at an estimated cost of £350 million. But it appears to be resisting giving the same treatment to people living in the London Boroughs who have for some years enjoyed free bus, tube and local train travel.

The Freedom Pass is currently costing Enfield Council taxpayers nearly £8 million a year and it goes up every year. So any refund from the Government could help to reduce Council Tax for everyone, or provide improved amenities or services for all residents.

Mark McLaughlin, the Council's director of finance and corporate services, has assured the Forum that he is taking the matter up with the Association of London Government - which represents all the London Boroughs - and with London Mayor Ken Livingstone, who introduced and administers the Freedom Pass scheme.

The ALG has told him: "We are clear that London Councils should receive their share of the £350m despite the fact that they are already funding the Freedom Pass". The ALG is concerned that Government departments will find that the £350 million is inadequate to cover the country and will try to prevent London getting its share - because it would represent a windfall for London councils.

Mr McLaughlin estimates that if Enfield does get its fair share of the £350m it could mean around £3m coming to

Enfield - money that could be well spent on a variety of projects such as giving us back some of the public toilets we have lost in the Borough.

The Forum has also written to the Borough's three MPs drawing their attention to this anomaly and urging them to take the matter up with Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who announced the free local bus travel scheme in his March 2005 Budget and with David Miliband, the Minister of Communities and Local Government and the Government Minister for London, Jim Fitzpatrick.

By April 2006, older people in both Scotland and Wales will have free bus travel throughout their countries and the over 50s Forum supports the National Pensioners' Convention campaign that this concession should be extended to English pensioners.



Canterbury waterways

Last Call for Highbury

Forum member **Geoff Robinson**, who leads our Edmonton sub-forum is keen to organise a visit to **Arsenal Stadium** before it moves to a new home. So this will be the last chance to see the famous marble halls, changing rooms, the trophy cabinet including the FA Cup and, among other things, the Club Museum telling the Club's story from 1886 to today.

Geoff wants to make the trip (which will cost £4 for seniors) in September or October - so if you would like to join a Forum trip to Highbury just register your interest with Geoff on **020 8807 7964**.

Let's Get Sociable!

New social secretary **Carole Sivak** writes

I would like to take this opportunity, not only to introduce myself but to give heartfelt thanks to Anne Wood, who recently retired from the position of Forum social secretary. Anne organised the very successful Christmas social last December and, more recently, the well attended trip to Canterbury.

Although a "northerner" by birth, I have lived in Enfield for nearly 30 years and feel an enormous pride and affection for the area and its cultural diversity. My children have attended schools in the Borough, I have walked my dogs in all of our lovely parks and I have made regular use of the excellent leisure facilities.

Having seen the results of the 2004 membership survey, it is clear that members are keen to participate in further social events. The Christmas social is to be repeated on Thursday 1st December and following the success of the Canterbury trip, there will certainly be more coach trips. I am presently investigating a "cross channel" visit to **Boulogne** or **Le Touquet**

in France, or the pretty towns of Adinkerke and De Panne in Belgium for autumn 2005. Both trips would include a visit to a hypermarket for bargain pre-Christmas fayre. I welcome ideas and suggestions to assist my planning for next year's trips. So how do you feel about Le Touquet?

Plan Ahead, the people who took us to Canterbury, can organise a coach trip to Le Touquet. A 51 seater coach would cost £1000, approximately £20 to £25 per head.

Leave 7 a.m. Cross-Channel Ferry 9.15 taking about an hour with Sea France. Probably arrive at Le Touquet around lunchtime. On the way we could stop for provisions at Ocean Supermarket on the Boulogne Road. An alternative trip would be to Belgium. Adinkerke (wine and chocolates stop) and on to Depanne, an old picturesque seaside market town with a Saturday market and an esplanade where members could walk by the sea. We are seeking your views at Forum Meetings before pressing ahead, or you can call me, Carole Sivak on **020 8360 7490**.

Friday 23 Sept 10am for 10.30 start

My Life at the Palace of Westminster

Speaker: Forum member **Major Peter Horsfall** who for 15 years was staff superintendent at the House of Lords.

At the Civic Centre, Silver Street



Canterbury trippers

...and Anne writes about the FORUM'S FIRST OUTING

Saturday 21 May saw members, partners and friends set off for a coach trip to Canterbury. The weather looked promising and sunshine stayed with us for most of the day. Our tour guide gave us an excellent commentary as the journey took us across London with clear views of the City and Docklands and then we were out on the open road heading for Rochester, the historical Dickensian town where we had time to have coffee in one of the many quaint teashops.

We continued on to Canterbury arriving in time to explore the sights and have lunch, before setting off again for Biddenden Vineyard.

Driving across the Kent countryside through the Garden of England, was perfect at this time of the year. The fields were full of lambs, spring flowers and the trees fresh and green. By the time we reached Biddenden Vineyard everyone was ready for their cream tea and the day finished off enthusiastically with wine and cider tasting. Thanks to the generous support of the Old Enfield Charitable Trust, members said how much they had enjoyed the day, made new friends and appreciated good conversation. They were all looking forward to the next trip.

Beware phoney bank mail

.....Email Scams

Various Forum members have received e-mails purporting to come from Abbey National, Barclays and HSBC asking in different ways for the same thing - details of their accounts. They make the excuse that this is "updating the software" or it is due to a "technical update". They all say that giving the information will help avoid fraud, keep your investment safely and if you don't cooperate your bank account may be blocked.

Please always remember that banks are registered and regulated and they do not e-mail or telephone customers for security information. So however plausible they seem, anybody receiving these e-mails should just delete them asap.

.....and Bogus Callers

There are too many cases of people parting with money to callers they do not know for us to be complacent and think that it can't happen to people we know. But it does happen - the phoney builder or decorator who calls just when you are thinking of having a job done. You make him a cup of tea, he seems genuine and even starts the job. Then he asks for some money to get along with, even drives you to the bank - and then you never see him again.

Help the Aged urges older people to follow the simple Lock, Stop, Chain and Check doorstep safety code. 1. Make sure all outside doors are kept locked. 2. Stop and think whether you are expecting anyone. 3. Keep the chain on the door and try and see who is calling before opening the door. 4. Don't be afraid to check the identity of the caller.

.....and Phone Fraud

Peter Smith has advised us of a telephone fraud currently in operation - this applies to home and work telephones, landlines and mobiles. If you receive one of these calls, on answering you will hear a recorded message congratulating you on winning an all expenses trip to an exotic location.

You will then be asked to press 9 to hear further details. If you press 9 you will be connected to a premium rate line that costs approximately £20 per minute. Even if you disconnect immediately, it will remain connected for a minimum of 5 minutes costing around £100. The final part of the call involves you being asked to key in your post-code and house number, which has other serious consequences.

After a further 2 minutes you will receive a message informing you that you are not one of the lucky winners. The total bill by then will be £100. Since the calls are originating from outside the UK, BT and other telephone companies are left relatively powerless to act. The only safe solution is to HANG UP before the message prompts you to dial 9, even safer HANG UP on any unsolicited 'free offer calls'.

There is another scam operating on mobile phones as well. A missed call comes up. The number is 0709 020 3840, the last four numbers may vary, but certainly the first four will remain the same. If you call this number back you will be charged £50 per minute. People have complained about their phone bills, once they have realised the cost of the call, but apparently this is completely legal.

So beware, do not call back numbers beginning with '0709'.

PLEASE PASS THIS INFORMATION ON TO YOUR FAMILY & FRIENDS

Did you hear.....?

As a Forum member was driving down the motorway, his car phone rang. Answering, he heard his wife's voice urgently warning him, "Harry, I just heard on the news that there's a car going the wrong way round the M25. Please be careful!"

"You're joking," said Harry, "It's not just one car. It's hundreds of them!"

Blowing hot and cold

At the same time as we are being told that there are more than **35,000 people** who are still not claiming their winter fuel allowance, warnings are being issued to older people in particular about a warmer than average July and August this year - following some pretty warm days in June.

The winter fuel bonus is available to every household where someone is aged over 60 on or before 25 September 2005. Ring the winter fuel helpline **08459 15 15 15** for more details.

Although severe heatwaves are uncommon in this country, last year in Europe some 27,000 people died as a result of the heat - and in England there were 2,000 more deaths than usual in 2004 and 85% of them were of people aged 75 and over.

The chief medical officer is urging everyone to take precautions against heat exhaustion and heat stroke. There will be plenty of warnings following a daily check monitoring heat-related calls to GPs. There could be a significant impact on people's health if temperatures reach 32 degrees celsius by day in London and 18 degrees at night for at least two days running.

Hints to deal with a heatwave include:

- *Avoid going out if you can in the hottest part of the day between 11 and 3*
- *Stay in the shade where possible, wear a hat and light loose fitting clothes*
- *Take plenty of water with you - take cold showers or baths and splash cold water on your face and back of the neck,*
- *Try to eat more cold food, particularly salads and fruit, drink plenty and often fruit juice and water.*

If you have elderly relatives or neighbours you can help by checking on them every day. Help them to keep their house as cool as possible by drawing the curtains, opening windows at night.

In a severe heatwave the body can overheat and dehydrate, leading to exhaustion or heat stroke. Symptoms to watch for include headache, nausea, intense thirst, sleepiness, hot red and dry skin, a sudden rise in temperature, confusion and aggression.

Falls Awareness Action Day - make sure you're there

Tuesday 19 July at the Southbury Leisure Centre, Southbury Road, will see us working in partnership with the Primary Care Trust and Leisure Centres Trust in providing a Fun and Facts day with the aim of reducing the number of people affected by falls, fractures and injuries - the ultimate killer for some 1500 people aged over 65 every year in England and Wales.

There'll be talks on a diet giving you healthy bones to help prevent falls and we'll finish the day with line dancing. And in between we'll have some easy chair-based exercises led by Chartered physiotherapist Alison Desner: ideas of exercises you can do in your own home; and we'll have a gentleman aged 85 taking us through Tai Chi. Admission is free and there'll prizes as well. So please register as soon as possible.

Here in Enfield we read that 247 people have been injured in the last two years following trips on the pavement. One of the biggest problems in residents' regaining control of their footpaths is the action of heavy delivery vehicles riding roughshod on pavements when road access is limited. Forum member Peter Smith took this



picture of the pavement in Devonia Gardens and the damaged caused - which had to be repaired by the Council at no cost, no doubt, to the haulier.

Our falls awareness day is another Forum initiative. We'll have the fire service there with free smoke alarms and there will be information galore on the services available to help make life better. This is a day not to be missed!

Still Going Up

That's the good news from the Borough's leisure centres where the number of customers for the discounted energy card to use the fitness suites rose another 15% in May, following the healthy rise in April when the scheme was introduced.

We are told that almost 100 Forum members have signed up to the special discount available only for our members and almost 900 over 60s have bought the special fitness discount card - that's double the 2004 figure. And we hope this will increase with the re-launch on **Thursday 8 September** of the 50 plus day at Edmonton Leisure Centre with yoga, swimming, table tennis and social games - complementing the very successful 50 plus day at Southbury leisure centre every Wednesday.

Our **"get fit for a longer life"** campaign is part of our planned strategy linking regular physical activity to personal safety, well-maintained streets and helping people lead independent lives without using health and social care services for as long as possible.

So we want to see the Council reverse its policy that leisure services are not a priority because by 2020 over half the adults in the UK will be over 50. Over 400,000 older people attend A & E departments every year and among them falls are the biggest cause of injury and death.

No wonder the Government is coming round to see the benefits of free swimming being extended to older people - concessions we lost years ago. But we're delighted to see that in Wales and Scotland free swimming schemes are in the offing.

So our discount scheme with the leisure centres is not a one-off isolated gesture. It is part of a plan to transform the NHS and many council services into services for improving long-term health and the quality of life, so as to delay the time when we need treatment for serious illness and calling in the social services.

Published by Enfield Borough Over 50s Forum.

Contact: Tony Watts, Secretary,

Tel: 020 8886 9125. E-mail:

tony_watts@enfieldover50sforum.org.uk