



April target for more toilets

More than 20 businesses - including McDonald's in Church Street, Enfield Town, Starbucks, KFC and the Hertford Road Co-op have indicated their willingness to join the community toilet scheme initiated by the Forum and now supported by the Council and Enfield Business and Retail Association (EBRA).

In exchange for a payment of about £600 a year to cover their extra maintenance costs, the businesses will make their toilets accessible to members of the public, without first compelling them to make a purchase. The toilets suggested by EBRA for their suitability will now be subject to another check by Council officers.

A legal agreement will then be drawn up covering the responsibilities and duties of the participants in the scheme, signage to be displayed in shop windows will be prepared so that the scheme will be under starter's orders by the time the new financial year starts in April.

So far there are businesses in Enfield Town, Palmers Green, Southgate, Southgate Green, Enfield Wash and Highway, Edmonton Green and Angel showing interest in the scheme but the Forum hopes it will cover every part of the Borough by April.

If you know of a suitable venue and have discussed the scheme with the manager / proprietor we will happily pass on the information to EBRA and LBE. Call Monty 020 882 1303 or Olivia 020 8447 8841

Toilets in the parks.....and libraries

The Council is spending £620,000 to refurbish the toilets in six parks. Grovelands, Tatem and Town are being done in this financial year ending April 2008 and Oakwood, Trent and Broomfield will be completed in 08/09.

Councillor Paul McCannah, Cabinet member for leisure, culture and the Olympics 2012, has confirmed to the Forum that any relocated library will have adequate toilet provision. He says: **"This is another reason why it is a good idea, wherever possible, to get libraries in prominent, visible and accessible locations - which essentially means shopping areas."**

Future FORUM Events

FORUM MEETINGS 2008 - Civic Centre

Please note: All these Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield meetings will start at 11am

Tuesday 29 January 11am start

Place Shaping in Enfield

Stephen Tapper, LBE assistant director planning & environment, **speaks on the new plan to ensure that services meet local needs and people's preferences.**

The presentation part of this meeting will be preceded by a short **Extraordinary General Meeting** to confirm an amendment solely in the stated aims in the Forum's constitution which is required for registration with the Charity Commission. The revised aims are set out separately on the back page and full copies of the amended constitution will be available at this meeting.

Tuesday 26 February 11am start

Keezia Obi, LBE adult protection coordinator, **speaks on Elder abuse: the hidden menace in our midst** and **Julia Brown**, Primary Care Trust chief operating officer (provider services) on

Improving services from hospital to home.

Tuesday 25 March 11am start

Claude Moraes, Member European Parliament and President of the all-party group on ageing, **speaks on Health and care challenges facing the EU.**

COFFEE MORNINGS in 2008

Held at Skinners Court

Tuesday 15 January 10am start

David Britton on: **My trips to the North & South Poles**

Less than 100 years ago, the polar regions were pristine wildernesses that had been barely touched by man. Today they are under threat and in the front-line in the battle against climate change and pollution.

Tuesday 19 February 10am start

Return visit of **Denis Rowley**, from the Driving Standards Agency on **Keeping older drivers on the road safely.**

Tuesday 18 March 10am start

Chris Carey (DHL) on **HGV and bus hazards facing older pedestrians** - presentation and demonstration.

Skinners Court is opposite the Fox Pub, Fox Lane, Palmers Green and served by the W6 & 121 Buses.

Let's make it a happy and healthy 2008

No joy on that 25p

Don't bank on any improvement in either the 25p a week addition to your pension on reaching the age of 80 or in the £10 Christmas bonus - although both have been paid at the same rate for over 30 years. We do keep tax and welfare policies under review, including all aspects of the State pension scheme, but there are no immediate plans to change them.

That was the stark message to the Forum sent by Minister of State for Work and Pension Mike O'Brien, QC, MP who says that while he has some sympathy for the views we expressed and he would like to tell us that both the age addition and Christmas bonus were being replaced with more generous payments.

"But Government have to make sometimes difficult decisions on how to spend the limited funds we have available. We do keep tax and welfare policies under review, including all aspects of the State pension scheme, but there are no immediate plans to make changes in this area". says Mr O'Brien.

But he does want to assure us that he is **"committed to delivering further improvements in provision for pensioners. Although we do not have any current plans to change the Christmas Bonus and the Age addition, since 1997 we have, as you are aware, implemented a number of new measures to assist people in retirement. These measures have been widely welcomed"**, adds the Minister.

Pension rises

The basic state retirement pension will go up by £3.40 in April, taking it to **£90.70** per week. Pensions for married women - based on the husband's contribution will go up by £2.05 a week to **£54.35**. The increases are based on the 3.9% price inflation for the year ended September 2007. Whatever the level of your pension it should go up by the same 3.9%

The pension credit guarantee scheme is going up by £5 week for people aged over 80 to **£124.05** and for a couple with at least one person over 80 the increase will be £7.65 to **£189.35**. This increase will be 4.2% and is in line with the earnings in average male earnings. Pension credit, promises the Government, will reach at least **£130** for a single person by April 2009.

From April it is important that anyone with a weekly income of less than **£174** (single) or **£255** (couple) should apply for pension credit - but if you have savings of over £6000 the pension credit could be reduced. For information/advice call 0800 89 1234 or the LBE line on 020 8899 3212.

Disregard £12 pension income

The Pensions Policy Institute (PPI) campaign for a pension income **"disregard"** - which would ignore the first £12 of weekly private pension when calculating benefits, is being supported by Help the Aged

It would be much fairer for today's pensioners - many of whom have saved towards their retirement and feel they are being unfairly penalised under the current system. If people are considering whether to contribute to a pension, introducing a disregard would also help to reduce the risks that it might not pay to save. People could be safe in the knowledge that saving for their retirement would be worthwhile and sustainable.

Pension income disregard has been achieved by the Royal British Legion in exempting war pensions from calculations by the vast majority of local councils and it could help to reduce the poverty that affects more than two million UK pensioners. The Government must respond positively to the proposals put forward by the PPI and take action to make income disregard a reality, says Help the Aged.

Southgate Symphony Orchestra

play

Beethoven

and

Vaughan Williams

Saturday 15 March, Bourne Methodist Church, Southgate.

Concession tickets for Forum members available.

Contact: 0208 8360 6921

SILVER SCREEN FILM CLUB

CineWorld, Southbury for **Enfield's Over 50s**

Mon **21 Jan 08** - *The Pianist*

Mon **18 Feb 08** - To be announced

Mon **17 Mar 08** - To be announced

Doors open at 10.30am for coffee & tea. Screening at 11am. Tickets £2.

Details on 020 8379 4640 or wriotheseleynn.rehill@enfield.gov.uk

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Thank you!

A big thank you to everyone who came to our Christmas social event and to the many people who helped to make it so successful - too many to list individually but we must mention social secretary Roddy Beare, Carol Ricketts, Olivia Goodfellow, Roy and Carol Barrows. Also the many local firms that donated prizes for our wonder raffle that raised nearly £180. They included:

Waitrose, Boots, Greggs, Enfield Leisure Centres, Goose at the Green, Dog and Duck, Millfield Theatre, Parkview Pharmacy, Oakwood, Wades Hill Butchery, Taste of Raj, Palmers Green, Papa Dell café, Enfield Town and the many Forum members who made generous donations.



More than 120 members enjoyed the Christmas Social

Random Round-up

Welcome to Armfield

The 40-strong Armfield Pensioners Club is the latest group to affiliate to the Forum. The group meets every Wednesday from 1pm-3pm at the Armfield Rd Church Hall, off Lancaster Road, for a social get-together often with entertainment. And they all went to the Moon under the Water in Chase Side for a Christmas turkey lunch. Secretary Don Edwards would welcome new members - call 020 8360 3616.

Maureen's hat-trick

Forum member Mrs Maureen Garside took the top award for the best environmental and wild flower garden in this year's Enfield in Bloom competition. She took the same prize in 2004 and 2005, but missed out in 2006 because the examiners didn't call. Maureen's Clay Hill garden is home to many birds such as the woodpecker, jay and doves as well as hedgehogs. "The pond is full of life with frogs and lillies and there is a 90ft garden to tend", says Maureen.

Free holiday at Eastbourne

The National Benevolent Fund for the Aged (NBFA) has been taking people on holiday since 1971 and its chairman, Winston S. Churchill, says that so far they have taken 50,000 people away. On March 9 a group will be leaving Potters Bar to spend a week in Eastbourne which eligible people living in Enfield can join.

To be eligible for a free NBFA holiday you must be aged 60 and/or over, be on a low income, not have had a holiday for at least three years and be able to get on and off a coach and manage steps. Call Pippa Evans at the NBFA for an application form 020 7828 0400.

Help around the home

People aged 60 and over who want to adapt their home so that they continue to live there can benefit from a new 5%VAT rate for professional fitting of aids such as sit-down showers, walk-in baths, grab rails, stair lifts - but DIY installations are excluded. In other words you must use a professional installer who should be aware of the new low VAT rate. The charities helpline 0845 302 0203 option 3 should help.

Celebrating success! 2008 in 2008?

**The Forum has 1782 members
and will celebrate this in
2008 with
an evening reception**

**Wednesday 20 February 6.30 -9.30 pm
Civic Centre Restaurant, Silver Street, Enfield Town**

Guest of honour Rodney Bickerstaffe
former President National Pensioners Convention

Tickets £5

020 8447 8841

Chat from the Chair



2007 was a truly remarkable year for the Forum. It was a year of innovation and experiment, a year of informative meetings and campaigning, a year of social gatherings - in other words we hope it was a year when everyone learned something or gained something in the way of new friendships.

Judging by the way our membership has rocketed, we must be doing something right including the appointment and retention of

our very special Olivia as development officer.

A year ago we were acclaiming that we had reached 1000 members for the first time. We now have more than 1700 fully paid up members and we have set our sights on reaching 2000 by 20 February when we shall be celebrating our success with a social evening at the Civic Centre restaurant, Silver Street. Our aim is 2008 members in 2008, so can you please try and bring one extra member into the fold in the next month?

Yes, we know there is so much more to do. At last we can see some daylight in the drive for more public toilets. We are making and seeing a difference in the numbers of older people participating in physical activity to improve their health; we've let Ministers at the highest level know we are not satisfied with the grant allocation to Enfield for lifelong learning or the miserly refusal to change the 25p Age Addition at the age of 80 and the £10 Christmas bonus.

We've let the decision-makers know that we didn't like the idea that people over 70 could only get their medication a month at a time and we didn't like the sound of MPs trying to remove the Mayor of London from his legal responsibility for the Freedom Pass. What is distressing is that so many decisions are still being taken without talking to, let alone consulting older people.

This is not just our problem. I had a very friendly meeting with the local Liberal Democrats, including their GLA transport spokesman, during which I asked them whether they had discussed with their MPs this plan to change the law on the Freedom Pass. They clearly knew nothing about it until we raised it.

So I hope that 2008 brings a major change in attitudes and policy-making. I'd like to see less lovely words about the quality of life of older people and more concrete action so that we can see the difference. I know that I'm not going to see my dream fulfilled of the opening of healthy living and ageing centres where people can come at any time of the day for advice, get health information, have a cuppa and a chat and perhaps join a flower arranging, poetry reading or creative writing group.

Well you can't stop me having dreams!

Monty Meth

Chair



.....Olivia reports.....

Stuff the newsletter!!

For the last year, a merry band of dedicated stuffers have been meeting at Salisbury House every two months to make sure that paid up Forum members, our affiliated groups and our complimentary associates, all get their newsletters in the best possible time. Cheerful chatter and a lot of laughing is always present and refreshments keep the stuffers going as they fold, stick, and stack the current pile of 1700+ envelopes. Thanks are due to many, including Joyce Pullen, Mr and Mrs Groen, Mary Stone, Mary Bushter, Rose Marie Kernot, Andy Smith, Val Bottomley, Betty Smith, Heather Cole, Louise Phillips, Jackie Keown, Cecilia Blaney, Peggy Preston, Gareth Wheeler and Jean Mittins and others on a less frequent basis.

Special thanks are due to committee member, Peter Smith, who collects the boxes from the printers, delivers them to Salisbury House and delivers the copies to all of our affiliates - a long and demanding task. So thank you, Peter.

They say that many hands make light work and this has certainly been the case for me personally as long gone are the days when I stuffed the newsletters alone in my living room while watching Loose Women or other such stimulating TV, or tried to bribe my daughters to help in-between coming in from school and going out with friends!

2008 is here and as the Forum grows in numbers if you too could spare a couple of hours every two months to help with this task. More stuffers means the quicker you get your copy.

I am sure you will join me in thanking the Forum stuffers, who ensure that your EXCELLENT value newsletter, six times per year plops onto your mat with certainty and good spirit. If you would like to help, please email Olivia at olivia.g@virgin.net or call 020 8447 8841 between 9-5pm.

Fireworks on South Bank

Forum members visited the South Bank ITV studios early in November to be part of the audience for the award winning lunchtime chat show "Loose Women." Before going into the studios, we enjoyed a delicious two course lunch at the local pub The Mulberry Bush, which was a perfect start to the afternoon - before the fireworks flew on Guy Fawkes night.

The studios were welcoming and we were seated ready to be put through our audience paces. The compere was hilarious and got everyone into the spirit of being a lively audience and the panel of loose ladies were Jackie Brambles, Carol McGiffin, Jane McDonald and Sheree. The guests on the show were Tracy and the number one in the charts, boy



"Loose women" lead by Roddy Beare

band McFly. We laughed a lot and it was so interesting to witness the precision of the technical side of such a show. Luckily, we have been allocated another batch of seats for February 2008 (which is fully booked) and I personally can't wait to go back - what fun!! For anyone interested in going to see a show at no cost, log on to www.applausestore.com/Site/ and you can find out what is on and arrange for you and friends or a group to go along and have a really fun time. There are loads of shows to go to from comedy to X Factor and so on.

Aachen - es war wunderbar!

After our most successful trip to Germany at the end of November, I am already planning another Christmas markets trip for 2008 and expect that places will be snapped up quickly. So you'll need to book your places early when the details appear in the next newsletter.

The 2007 Christmas markets trip was full of fun just as last year's one to the Rhine Valley. After a speedy crossing to Calais, we drove through France and Belgium before reaching Aachen. This beautiful city was a perfect base from which to explore the region and our modern hotel was first class. The winding pedestrianised streets were full of beautiful shops, both large and small, selling the local Aachen biscuits and cakes and pastries galore.

On Saturday we set off for Monschau, which is like stepping back in time. The cobbled streets and weaving streams, the sound of Christmas carols and the smells of pancakes, sausages and chestnuts, made for a great start to the trip. After leaving Monschau, we travelled cross country through

delightful villages, and also passed the Siegfried Line, which started the group singing that wartime ditty: "We're gonna hang out our washing on the Siegfried Line" (which some of us were too young to remember). The rows of stone triangles, erected to keep the advancing Allied tanks at bay during the last world war, were a formidable sight and yet seemed to blend in with the farmland in which they stand to this day.

Crossing the border into Holland, we arrived at Valkenburg, which is a bustling town, full of atmosphere and where the markets are in underground grottos, the ceilings of which are made from the sediments in the sea, millions of years ago and are full of fossils. On Sunday, we visited the six markets in Cologne and started at the famous Dom cathedral, an austere yet magnificent structure.

The smell of incense was intoxicating and as the Sunday service was taking place, we were limited to looking at the interior from the back of the cathedral. We drove back past the Rhine River and spent the rest of the afternoon exploring the Aachen markets. On the final day we set off for Bruges in Belgium, which again is a delightful city and remarkably quiet for the time of year. The central square enticed us into restaurants and cafes and the Lake of Love with dozens of resident swans, was beautiful.

Bruges is known as the Venice of the North and the little bridges did indeed remind one of Venice, with the canals running underneath. Our last stop was to P&J chocolate factory, where we had a final chance to buy gifts, before returning home, under the safe driving of Peter, who had made the journeys so informative and relaxing.

Aachen trip feedback
"It was a wonderful trip. Good company, excellent facilities and a lot of laughs"
 Shirley Scott
"An excellent chance to socialise and get to know members who before were just faces at meetings. Brilliantly organised four days with good food and drink and plenty of opportunities to try Gluhwein"
"Yes, very enjoyable-Three cheers-so so excellent"
And lastly a comment from Peter the driver: "Honestly- the nicest private group I have had the pleasure to take on tour. A real treat for me!! I had a wonderful time. Many thanks"

Olivia Goodfellow

Enfield and Southgate Branch WEA

Do you wish to know more about the story of Berlin, Romantic Art, the Middle Ages or fabulous fossil sites?

Then start the New Year by joining our friendly group at the Enfield and Southgate Branch WEA classes for adults. Daytime courses commence in January. We hold weekly two-hour sessions at Enfield Baptist Church and the United Reformed Church, Fox Lane, N13. You can also find out more about understanding music, English literature or Japanese art. Come on – stimulate those little grey cells!

Pick up a brochure from the library or call 020 8882 0615 or 020 8882 0207.

Book with Barrows

Our vice-chair Roy Barrows and his wife Carol are doing a sterling job, getting people up and out and about. Following the first, most successful curry evening attended by some 40 people, the Forum has arranged its second Forum curry evening for Monday 28 January 2008 (7 for 7-30 pm) at the **"Taste of Raj"** restaurant, 76 Aldermans Hill (opposite Broomfield Park and near to Palmers Green Station - Buses **W6 and 121** pass the door) when you can sample fine Indian cuisine **at the special Forum price of £7-95** (excluding drinks) from the extensive menu. Our host, Anwar Hussein, can accommodate as many as 50 Forum members on this Monday evening.

To reserve your place for this "Forum Second Curry Evening" Please call Roy Barrows on 020 8360 8561 or email: roybarrows@broadfields.wanadoo.co.uk

And there's a **Freedom Pass trip to Kensington** visiting the Royal Albert Hall & the Victoria & Albert Museum on either Thursday 24 January or Friday 29 February.

The arrangements for both trips are as follows:

Meet: Southgate Tube Station for prompt departure at 9am and travel on the Piccadilly Line to South Kensington, followed by a short walk to The Albert Hall - programme -

10-30: Guided tour of the Royal Albert Hall (Charged)

12-00: Break for lunch at The Royal Albert Hall Cafe

1-00: Short walk to Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A)

1-30: Guided tour of Victoria and Albert Museum (charged)

3-00: Afternoon refreshment break at the V&A cafe or time to revisit some V&A exhibits before returning home.

Although I have negotiated a concession rate for each of the guided tours, the cost for this most interesting day will be **£11** (non refundable)

Note: Each tour is strictly limited to 30 people

Please call Roy Barrows on 020 8360 8561 to book your place and then forward your payment (cash or cheque made payable to Roy Barrows) to Roy Barrows, 72 Broadfields Avenue, Winchmore Hill, N21 1AH together with this slip

Chosen Tour Date: **24th Jan.** or **29th Feb.**

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Payment enclosed for the sum £ _____

Freedom pass fight goes on

More than 3,000 local people have now signed the petition forms we are circulating on behalf of the National Pensioners' Convention calling for no change in the role of the Mayor of London in having the final say on the much-coveted Freedom Pass. Our concerns are not about the immediate future of the pass. We want to emphasise that there is no threat to the current pass not being renewed in March. Indeed, a new package was agreed on 13 December.

Under the new deal, disabled people will, for the first time, travel free on the London overground network at any time. People over 60 and disabled people will be able to use their pass half an hour earlier - at 9am instead of 9.30 - bringing the overground network into line with other TfL services.

More good news is that the government is spending up to £1 billion a year in introducing a new national bus travel scheme for all pensioners. We will then be able to use our Freedom Pass to travel in every town and city in England - but only England, although it is hoped to extend the scheme to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in the years to come.

However, we think it would be wrong not to draw your attention to a move that was made in Parliament to hand the Mayor of London's reserve powers guaranteeing the Freedom Pass, enshrined in law under the Greater London Authority Act 1999, to the government in the form of an unnamed secretary of state.

True, this move was defeated but we think it right to warn everyone that the plan could be revived at any time with a change of government - and by then it could be too late to retain the scheme we now have. It will then be useless saying: "Why didn't you warn us this could happen?" This was no one-off attempt to change the Mayor's role for the critics were defeated in the committee discussing the new concessionary transport bill and persisted in taking their opposition to the floor of the House of Commons.

The danger we see in involving the government is that concessionary fare schemes outside London are inferior in that the starting time is invariably 9.30am - ours is 9am and we even want it earlier than that. Schemes outside London are confined to buses whereas ours embraces the underground and overground trains covering Greater London. And to reduce the cost a future government could cut our freedom pass back, possibly only to be used on buses.

Those who voted for the removal of the Mayor's powers protest loudly that this is not their intention and it will never happen and all they want to do is reduce the cost of the Freedom Pass to London councils and indirectly reduce council tax. Mr David Burrowes MP, in a letter to the Forum said: **"I want to see the councils and Mayor agree a fairer basis for the cost of the pass, and a fairer process to settle disputes concerning the costs.....the cost of the Freedom Pass is not calculated upon usage but rather the Mayor Livingstone demands a blanket fee across London"**.

Well, according to the local press a new agreement based on usage has been signed by London Councils without getting rid of the Mayor's role in the scheme and thus removing Londoners from their democratic right in determining the scope of the Freedom Pass scheme.

The idea that Councils should pay according to usage is not so popular with inner London Councils in, for example, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Wandsworth and Westminster (none of them Labour-controlled incidentally, so this is not a party political issue) because they have fewer car owners than Enfield and use the buses more often - and they too have their fair share of low income residents

So basing the cost of the Freedom Pass on usage could be controversial and divisive between boroughs and between pensioners in different boroughs and could undermine the united battle to preserve the scheme we now have in its entirety.

Londoners pay for the Freedom Pass with some £55 million a year added by the government and we take the view that Londoners should decide how it should be financed - not some Secretary of State who has no direct responsibility for London and would be mindful of the rest of the country with an inferior scheme. **So we urge all Newsletter readers to keep up the good work and help us get the maximum number of signatories to the petition.**

A key aim of the over 50s Forum is to promote and help older people in longer life - hence our emphasis in this Newsletter on what our readers

Want to be and stay healthy? - Obesity - we're the champions of Europe.

Then get up and get moving five times a week!

A major contributing factor to the obesity epidemic is physical inactivity with up to three quarters of adults in the UK not doing enough to benefit their health.

Adults who are physically active have a 20 - 30% reduced risk of premature death and up to 50% reduced risk of developing major chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, type II diabetes and hypertension. Lack of physical activity has also been shown to be associated with breathing problems, infertility, psychological problems and even some cancers.

The current minimum recommendations for physical activity are easily achievable on a weekly basis and don't require specialist equipment. For your general health benefit, adults should achieve a total of at least 30 minutes a day of moderate intensity physical activity on five or more days per week. While for children at least 60 minutes per day is advised.

Moderate physical activity will usually mean any activity which will result in the following:

- An increase in breathing rate
- An increase in heart rate, to the level when the pulse can be felt;
- A feeling of increased warmth, possibly accompanied by sweating on hot or humid days.

The recommended levels of activity can be achieved all in one go or split up into 10 minute sessions throughout the day - for example, three spells of 10 minute brisk walks. For many people, 45 - 60 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity a day is necessary to prevent obesity.

If you wish to lose weight then a total of 60 - 90 minutes per day is recommended. Examples of moderate intensity physical activity are walking at a brisk pace, light cycling and even Hoovering! If you are worried about joint pains then swimming / walking in the water in a pool is excellent as it reduces the stress on the joints.

With the wide variety of activities available at Enfield's Leisure Centres, there really is no excuse not to get up and get moving at least five times a week - especially if you take advantage of the discounts negotiated by the Forum for its members. See: Spring forward to a healthy 2008 - page 8.

If you have any medical illness, physical restriction or disability that may be aggravated or adversely affected by exercise, then please seek your doctor's advice prior to starting.

Dr Zafar Iqbal*

MBBS, BSc, DCH, DRCOG, MRCP, MSc (Sports Med), MFSEM (UK)

**Dr Iqbal is the sports and exercise specialist doctor at the Gateway Surgical Centre, Newham, and academy & reserve team doctor for Tottenham Hotspur FC. He is also chairman of the FA medical society.*

So what are you doing about it?

New evidence has shown that the UK is the Obesity Champion of Europe with nearly a quarter of adults and just over 10% of children classified as obese. A recent report by the Government's Foresight think-tank warned that in just over 40 years, more than half of all men and women and a quarter of all children in the UK are likely to be clinically obese if current trends continue.

There is strong evidence that being overweight or obese increases the risk of heart disease, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, musculo-skeletal disease and many commoner cancers. A recent government report showed that almost £1 billion is spent on treating obesity related conditions and the cost to the wider economy (i.e days off work, lost productivity) is as much as £10 billion. If current rates of obesity continue this could cost the NHS £6.5 billion a year and the cost to the wider society up to £45 billion by 2050.

In addition, it is estimated that life expectancy, which we acclaim because it is increasing all the time, could be better still for a lot of people. Indeed, life expectancy is reduced by an average nine years and accounts for 9,000 premature deaths a year as a result of obesity. Obesity can usually be managed with the help of your GP and the primary care services of dieticians so that if you can achieve a 10% reduction in weight it could reverse the progress of type 2 diabetes in 50% of cases and even more importantly, reduce obesity-related deaths by 40%.

So how do you tell if you are overweight or obese and need to start work on reducing your weight? The method that most people are likely to be familiar with is that of body mass index (BMI) which is a ratio of weight (Kg) / height (metres). This can be calculated for you by your GP or at the leisure centres in Enfield.

The following table shows what the different levels of BMI represent

BMI (Kg / M2)	CLASSIFICATION	RISK OF CO-MORBIDITIES
<18.5	<i>Underweight</i>	<i>Low</i>
18.5 - 24.9	<i>Desirable weight</i>	<i>Average</i>
25.5 - 29.9	<i>Overweight</i>	<i>Increased</i>
30.0 - 34.9	<i>Obesity I</i>	<i>Moderate</i>
35.5 - 39.9	<i>Obesity II</i>	<i>Severe</i>
>40.0	<i>Obesity III (Morbidly Obese)</i>	<i>Very Severe</i>

BMI (kg/M2) Classification Risk of co-morbidities

However waist circumference is commonly used as it is easy to measure and gives a useful measure of central adiposity in adults as BMI does not distinguish between body fat mass and mass due to muscular physique. The waist circumferences below are the maximum recommended measurements. Higher than these, there are increased chances of associated medical problems linked to obesity.

Enfield to become fitter, so that hopefully they can enjoy a healthier and can do for themselves - and on developments in health care making for

	White European	Asian
Men	>40 Inch or >102 cm	>36 Inch or >90 cm
Women	>35 Inch or >88 cm	>32 Inch or >82cm

Maximum recommended waist circumferences for adults. Asian adults have a higher risk of some obesity linked conditions and so lower maximum waist circumference is recommended.

An individual with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of over 35 is considered to be up to 80 more times likely to develop type 2 diabetes than someone with a BMI of less than 25. Also, if the BMI is greater than 30 the risk of coronary heart disease is quadruple that of someone with a normal BMI.

What is important is first of all to recognise and accept that you have a weight problem and are willing to do something about it for yourself. Regular physical activity alone can result in weight loss of 0.5 - 1kg per month. However, a combination of physical activity and adopting a healthier eating regime diet is more effective to maximise weight loss.

If you are ready to change your lifestyle you can make a start by asking your GP for the "losing weight – feeling great" booklet. You can also take advantage of your Forum membership to claim the special discount at one of the Enfield Leisure Centre swimming pools or gyms, where you can get free advice and help on the kind of exercises that will help you achieve your weight loss objective.

You have to give your new lifestyle at least three months and preferably six months to judge the benefit and see if your weight is down five to 10% - but then you have to keep it there and do even better!

If you have any medical illness, physical restriction or disability that may be aggravated or adversely affected by exercise, then please seek your doctor's advice prior to starting.

Dr Zafar Iqbal

Walk your way to fun and fitness

Walk Enfield is a new "get walking - get talking" directory listing a host of tips and activities, compiled by a team which included the Forum's development officer, Olivia Goodfellow. Olivia leads a Saturday morning walk in Grovelands Park, starting at 10.30 outside the cafe. From April till September the walk will be on Monday evening starting at 6.30pm

Available in the library, the booklet advertises different walks every day and adds that walking is the perfect way to have fun and get fit. It is a great way to make new friends. And walking strengthens the heart and can reduce the risk of strokes, diabetes, high blood pressure, bowel cancer, Alzheimer's, osteoporosis, arthritis, anxiety, stress and coronary heart disease.

It says almost everyone can do it - the majority of Enfield's urban parks are wheelchair accessible. It's the ideal way to get fit and healthy and there's little risk of injury. It's free and you can walk anywhere, anytime. All you need are comfortable walking shoes.

Just 30 minutes a day brisk walking is all it takes to feel the difference. And if that seems a lot in one go, you can walk for ten minutes, three times a day - or 15 minutes twice a day. Brisk walking means walking a little faster so that your heart beats a little faster - and you should still be able to chat to the friends you will make on the walk.

If you want to talk about joining a walk you can call the LBE parks outreach team on 020 8441 8272 or 020 8449 2459. Come the spring, the sports development team will be providing volunteer walk leader training, which is a fun one day course held in one of the Borough's parks. If you are interested in becoming a walk leader, contact Olivia on 020 8447 8841 or email olivia.g@virgin.net or Usha on 020 8379 3762

Evergreen: a beacon for the future

The opening of the Evergreen primary care centre at Edmon-ton Green is hailed as one of the highlights in the Enfield Primary Care Trust annual report. The centre includes six GP practices looking after 15,000 patients. It also has a variety of in-house services such as family planning, dentistry, podiatry, speech therapy and it is open from 9am to 9pm, Monday to Friday.

In its annual report the PCT says it has recruited six more community matrons during the year to work with patients in their own homes rather than being admitted to hospital. It has also formed a provider services division with special emphasis on helping older people - a topic on the agenda for the Forum's February meeting.

Enfield Primary Care Trust holds the NHS budget of £378 million which it spent on buying health care for the borough's 293,000 residents last year. Of the total spend, £178 million went on acute services provided for in-patient and A&E hospital services, £42 million on mental health, £8 million on people with learning difficulties, £49 million on primary care and £37 million on medicines prescribed by 229 GPs.

The PCT says it is keen to commission additional GP services after 6.30pm and at weekends as part of its primary care and community investment plan for the next five years. The plan has identified a need for six primary care practitioners in Eastern Enfield as well as other service improvements. In the meantime, the report says the PCT continues to monitor access to GP services and encourages GP practices to extend their opening hours.

The PCT has also established an 18-week referral to treatment programme to ensure that the target that no one will have to wait longer than 18 weeks from GP referral to the start of hospital treatment is met. Both Barnet & Chase Farm and North Middlesex University Hospital have established their own groups to ensure this aim is met.

Financial problems

Enfield PCT overspent £13million in the financial year 2006/7 largely due to unbudgeted costs incurred by Barnet and Chase Farm Hospital. Taken with previous debts, the

PCT was in the red to the tune of £20.5 million on March 31 2007 - and as this cash must be repaid with interest there is ongoing pressure on its finances.

NHS London has classified the PCT in its highest risk category for finance and it is subject to monthly monitoring of the position so as to get back into balance by 2011. To help achieve this a new chief executive and director of finance from Haringey PCT were appointed last August for an interim period to help create a robust financial management to eliminate the overspend and then repay the historic deficit of the PCT.

An action plan has been developed and is now being implemented to the timeframe approved by NHS London. As part of the changes, an experienced financial controller has been brought in by the PCT to manage the year-end accounts. The PCT says it has now drawn up a realistic five year financial plan approved by NHS London. This plan covers both income and expenditure, and the management of cash flow.

Getting healthcare right for the future

The future role and responsibilities that Barnet, Chase Farm and North Middlesex hospitals will play in meeting the needs and aspirations of the 280,000 Enfield residents will, we suspect, remain up in the air for many months to come as both the London NHS and the Department of Health become involved in some final decision-making.

Meanwhile, the Forum remains firmly focused on the need for high quality GP services regardless of which part of the Borough people live, because this is the first port of call we all make - and often it is the most important call. So we have advocated and support any measures the Primary Care Trust can take to expand the range of surgery services to include blood tests and diagnostics such as X-ray and ultrasound and save that hospital trek and wait which ought to be confined to just MRI scans.

We are at one with the PCT in believing that high quality care in the community can reduce the need for hospital admissions and in getting surgery opening hours extended. Improving life expectancy and the quality of life is a common objective of both the PCT and the Forum.

So we are urging full speed ahead for PCT plans to open a network of urgent care centres with extended hours, staffed by GPs, hospital clinicians and nursing staff who will have access to A&E departments as well as hospital consultants.

Clearly, with its overhanging financial problems the PCT has got to get the best value for taxpayers money and we believe that much can be achieved by taking proactive, preventative measures such as promoting physical activity, cutting smoking, reducing alcohol intake and stemming the obesity trend will all help. If we let things drift then it will inevitably lead to many more people needing health care, costs will spiral and the NHS as a whole will be the loser.

The test for the PCT and ourselves will be whether together we can help more people take care of themselves; whether there are better services available at GP surgeries without going to hospital; and whether we have really tackled the major killers such as stroke and heart disease.

The biggest test of all - for everyone of us - is whether we have reduced the scandalous 8.8 years difference in life expectancy for men and the 6.6 years difference for women living in some parts of Edmonton, compared with those living in the west of the Borough.

Ten small steps to transform your health

Improving your health does not mean going on a crash diet. You can:

- Reduce your portion size and eat a properly balanced diet
- Switch to skimmed milk
- Walk as much as possible
- Make sure you eat breakfast and avoid particularly fatty or sugary foods
- Replace crisps and chocolates with fruit
- Make your bedroom a place for sleeping – relaxed and uncluttered
- Swap coffee for tea
- Try green tea, an elixir for vigour and strength - research shows it is beneficial in reducing heart disease, Alzheimers and weight loss
- Steam your food – it keeps all the goodness intact
- Finally Laugh and Be Happy

....and five steps to healthy thinking

Never say you are too old to change -

- If you know you're overweight, try living without that biscuit or second helping.
- If you tend to say: "I shouldn't have to do this," ask yourself why the universe has made you a special case.
- When you're having a bad day, put things into perspective by remembering that whatever you're going through, you're not a starving child in Africa.
- If you get easily upset, ask yourself if there's any evidence that you are more frail or sensitive than other people.
- Mental resilience is difficult to achieve. But if we acquire more of it, we not only enjoy far more fulfilling lives - we make things much easier for everyone around us.

SAGA magazine December 2007

Spring forward to a healthy 2008

Just look on the bright side of life. British Summer Time begins on Sunday 30 March, the days will be longer and brighter. So this is just the time to decide to change your lifestyle and make that pledge to do something about your health and fitness.

And to help you we've teamed up with **Enfield Leisure Centres** and **Enfield Primary Care Trust** in organising two **Spring Forward to a Healthy 2008** activity days at **Southbury Leisure Centre** on **Wednesday 26 March** and **Edmonton Leisure Centre** on **Monday 31 March**.

The timing is perfect as it coincides with the run-up to renewing both the Forum annual membership and the Energy discount card - which will again be available at half-price to Forum members. Since last April around 400 of these discount cards have been bought by Forum members.

Some 80 people are regularly attending the Wednesday Over 50s day at Southbury Leisure Centre and the Monday Over 50s day at the new Edmonton Leisure Centre has a regular 40 + attending - and it's growing in popularity.

We aim to make our two Spring Forward to a Healthy 2008 days the springboard for signing up more people to take advantage of the leisure centre facilities which are planned to expand this year with an **Over 50s day at the Hertford Road Albany Leisure Centre**, probably on a Friday and leisure centres offering new health and beauty services such as massage, reflexology, facials and waxing.

The leisure centres are by far the biggest providers of health and fitness activities in the Borough with over 1,300 people aged over 60 buying the annual Energy discount card - a 24% increase over 2006. Even more impressive is the growing popularity of the new Edmonton Leisure Centre with over 1000 monthly members compared with some 400 at the peak of the old centre which had declined to around 150 last January.

The programme for the over 50s days at Edmonton and Southbury includes swimming and pilates. There's badminton, table tennis and short mat bowls and the fitness gym opens at the same time. There's a meeting room to chat and play board games where you have lunch.

The whole day costs £6, but if you buy an energy discount card the price is cut to £3 and better still if you are a Forum member with an annual £280 Leisure Centre membership, or a monthly £28 direct debit - then the day is free! But to get the special rate for Forum members you must produce your Forum membership card and contact the Leisure Centres sales office on 020 8245 5191.

Around 170 Forum members have signed up to the annual or monthly fee schemes which means that they are almost certainly daily or very regular swimmers or gym participants and we want to help increase that number because it is the best deal in town.

First 400 tested for bowel cancer

The first six weeks of the new bowel cancer screening programme has seen more than 400 people in Enfield return the test kit for examination. Men and women aged between 60-69 will all get an invitation to join the programme around their birthdate. But people aged 70 and over do not have to wait, they can request a test kit now by calling freephone 0800 707 60 60. The age of bowel screening is being extended in 2010 from 70 to 75 which will embrace over one million more people, but we emphasise that anyone over 69 can apply now.

Once the test kit has been returned and checked, those patients found with an abnormal result such as hidden blood will be called for a colonoscopy to diagnose any early sign of bowel cancer or bowel polyps - which are not cancerous but can change into cancer after a number of years.. Polyps can be removed during a colonoscopy, so reducing the risk of cancer developing.

Only about two in every 100 people will have an abnormal result after their screening test, but this does not necessarily mean that they have cancer. Nevertheless, about one in 20 people will develop bowel cancer in their lifetime - both men and women are at risk. Hence our campaign to get the maximum number of screenings because the earlier the detection if anything is not quite right, the better the chance of recovery.

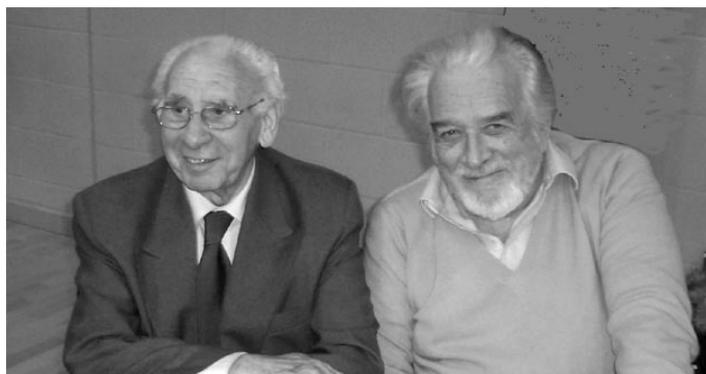
Bowel cancer is the third most common cancer in this country and the second leading cause of cancer deaths.

Over 19,000 people die of bowel cancer each year. If bowel cancer is detected at an early stage, there is a 90% chance of it being successfully treated. Eight out of ten people diagnosed with it are aged over 60. Once you sign up for the screening you will be sent a home testing kit.

Do your bit - use the kit

Forum aids 'flu jab campaign

Combining the flu jab with talks on physical activity and healthy living and a sandwich lunch proved a winning formula as more than 250 people attended our first event at the new Edmonton Leisure Centre. Another 100 came to the Ordnance Road Methodist Church session and over 50 were seen at the Boots pharmacy in the Enfield Town shopping precinct.



Well-known actor Nicholas Courtney, who played the part of Lethbridge-Stewart in Doctor Who for five years, was one of the attractions when over 400 people received their 'flu jab at three Forum organised events in different parts of the Borough.

Health Awareness Day

Wednesday 6 February, Southgate Library
High Street, N14 6BP 10.30 - 2.30 p.m.

A free healthy lunch combined with information and talks on diabetes, arthritis, cancer, nutrition and healthy hearts. Armchair exercise rounds off the session. **Tickets from Southgate Library** - £1 deposit refundable at the event.

Info: Sumita Choudhury Tel: 020 8379 2693

Canoeing comes to Edmonton

We can now offer canoeing lessons to Forum members on Monday afternoons at Edmonton Leisure centre. The sessions are free and will be from 3pm-4pm in the pool. Our experienced coach David Rudland will help you explore the delights of this amazing activity, well in time for the 2012 Olympics! Participants need have no previous experience, but all are required to be confident in water. All you need to bring is your swim wear and an old t-shirt to wear on top. Sessions begin on January 14 for a three-week trial. This could be the best New Year's activity that you do! If you have any questions, please contact David on 020 8803 4878.

Get active

The British Heart Foundation has launched a 30 Minutes a Day Anyway campaign to encourage people over 50 to invest in their health and well-being by becoming active. Ring 020 7935 0185 for your free copy.

Diabetes: in facts & figures

- The number of 2007 diabetes sufferers worldwide: 246 million - a 27% increase on 2003. In 1985 there were only 30 million sufferers.
- Number of diabetes sufferers expected by 2025: 380 million
- Number of people expected to die this year of diabetes: 3.8 million
- Estimated cost of treating diabetes: worldwide £76.5 billion
- India has more diabetes sufferers than any other nation - 41million. China, America, Russia and Germany are the other countries with the most people with the illness. At least 50% of people with diabetes are unaware that they have it.

Source: Sunday Times 11 November 2007

Smokers have a far greater risk of developing type 2 diabetes compared with non-smokers, says the latest research study by Swiss scientists. They reckon active smokers having 20 or more cigarettes a day have a 61% risk compared with lighter smokers where the risk is cut to 29%.

How quitting smoking helps your body and wallet

- After **8 hours** - risk of heart attack starts to fall - money saved: **£1.66**
- **24 hours** - lungs start to clear mucus - saving: **£5**
- **48 hours** - body now nicotine free - taste and smell improves - saving: **£10**
- **7 weeks** - exercise is easier - saving: **£245**
- **6 months** - lung efficiency increased 5-10% - saving: **£840**
- **10 years** - heart attack risk same as non-smoker - saving: **£16,800**

Source: NHS - based on average price of £5 for 20 cigarettes and a 20 per day habit.

Recruits wanted to muscle up for a healthy old age

The University of Nottingham is looking to recruit men of two specific age groups to help understand the effect of exercise and nutrition on muscle in old age - and to volunteer you need to be a non-smoker aged between 18 and 30 or 65 and 75.

The team from the School of Graduate Entry Medicine and Health at Derby City General Hospital hope that their research will help the elderly avoid falls and fractures by discovering the amount of exercise and the kind of nutrition needed to maintain and rebuild muscles.

Muscle makes up about half the body weight of a healthy person. It is vital to maintain health and physical strength for functional independence. However, as we age we lose muscle. Changes begin at around 45 to 50 years of age, which can ultimately lead to decreased strength, increased fatigue, a decline in joint stability and thus to falls and broken bones.

Michael Rennie, Professor of clinical physiology, and an expert on muscle growth and wasting in health and disease, said: **"If we can preserve muscle tissue and maintain health and independence as we get older, that in turn will reduce healthcare costs associated with age related muscle wasting. We already know that it is harder for older people to maintain their muscles and we know that exercise can build muscle. What we do not yet know is how much or how little exercise is needed to do this or how best to feed people to maximise the benefit."**

Volunteers will also receive an honorarium to cover their expenses. The study has just started and the researchers hope to finish by the middle of 2009. The team needs to recruit 78 volunteers over the next 18 months and results should begin to come through by the middle of 2008.

More information is available from Dr Vinod Kumar on 01332 724 632.

North Mid. wants more freedom

The North Middlesex University Hospital is applying to become a foundation trust and they are looking for local people to become members of the hospital who will be able to vote or stand in elections for the Board of Governors. Members will be able to get more actively involved on any consultation plans for the future and will receive regular news updates.

Becoming a foundation trust will give the hospital greater freedom on how best to spend money to meet the needs of its patients and local community. To help local people hear about the plans, a number of events are being held in Enfield and Haringey over the next few months. The hospital would also welcome the opportunity to speak to local community groups about its plans.

The Trust's vision for the future is to become one of London's major acute hospitals and be the hospital of choice for the local community, providing first-class patient care in modern facilities. It believes that becoming an NHS Foundation Trust will help them to achieve their objective.

Construction on the £111 million redevelopment of the hospital began last August to provide state-of-the-art facilities for accident and emergency services, diagnostics, in-patient wards, operating theatres and endoscopy.

For more information about how to become a member please contact the membership office on freephone: 0800 028 6394 or via email to: membership@nmh.nhs.uk Alternatively you can write to:

FREEPOST LON11447

North Middlesex University Hospital

Your health, Your community, Your hospital

London N18 1BR

Justin Talbot

Recognising a stroke

Strokes are the third most common cause of death in the UK, accounting for more than 60,000 deaths a year. If care was better organised, the National Audit Office claims that 550 deaths could be avoided every year and an extra 1,700 patients would make a full recovery. Changes could also save the NHS £20 million a year.

We all mix with older people, so it may be useful one day to know how to recognise signs of a stroke. It will only take you a minute to read this. A neurologist said that if he can get to a stroke victim within three hours he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke. He said the trick was getting a stroke recognised, diagnosed, and then getting the patient medically cared for within three hours.

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, this lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognise the symptoms of a stroke.

Now doctors say a bystander can recognise a stroke by asking three simple questions:

- S • Ask the individual to Smile.**
- T • Ask the person to Talk to speak a simple sentence (coherently) (i.e It is sunny out today)**
- R • Ask him or her to Raise both arms.**

***Note:** Another 'sign' of a stroke is to ask the person to 'stick' out their tongue. If the tongue is 'crooked', if it goes to one side or the other, that is also an indication of a stroke.

If he or she has trouble with any one of these tasks, call 999 immediately and describe the symptoms. A cardiologist told us that if everyone who reads this message passes it on to 10 people you can bet that at least one life will be saved.

The eyes have it

Opticians are not trained just to test your sight and prescribe glasses or contact lenses. They are also health specialists and trained to recognise potentially blinding eye conditions such as macular degeneration and glaucoma and refer you on for medical care - without making an appointment with your GP. They can also spot signs of conditions such as diabetes.

So if you know somebody that is house-bound and over 60, did you know they can have a free eye test at home? Do you have a neighbour or relative that you think should have an eye test?

Rose Optical Services will arrange home visits by experienced opticians for house-bound people who are registered partially-sighted, diagnosed diabetic, receiving pension credit or income support and glaucoma sufferers. Contact Rose Optical Services on Freephone 0800 731 0031.

Age related eye conditions are the most common cause of sight loss in the UK – and 45% of blind or partially sighted adults live alone. There is statistical evidence to show that by the time we reach 60, one in 12 of us will be blind or partially-sighted - and this figure rises to one in six when we hit 75.

So what can we do to improve eye health?

- Get your eyes checked regularly. Everyone of pensionable age should have an annual eye test - and it is free! Recent research reveals that almost two million diabetes sufferers are not having their eyes tested regularly.
- Stop smoking to reduce the chances of going blind from age-related macular degeneration - the main cause of blindness.
- Lose weight because there is a direct link between obesity and common conditions that affect eyesight, such as diabetes and age-related macular degeneration.
- Have a balanced diet low in saturated fat, but high in vegetables, particularly greens, fruit, nuts and oily fish can help prevent cataracts.
- Don't accept that worsening eyesight is an inevitable part of the ageing process - see an optician.

GPs urged to drop 0844 phone lines

Doctors should no longer be using 0844 telephone numbers that charge patients extra money to call their GPs, says the Department of Health. This ruling, reported by the Times on 20 November, vindicates the Forum's campaign against 0844 numbers which can be as much as 4p a minute more to call from a BT landline than a standard local call. Currently there are 13 surgeries in Enfield with the 0844 telephone prefix and we urge their patients to ask the practice manager whether they are going to heed the DoH ruling.

Alan Johnson, the secretary of state for health said in the House of Commons on 26 November: **"Patients should pay no more than the cost of a local call"** to contact their surgery and he suggested that if they were this could be in breach of the GP contract. The Forum has asked the Primary Care Trust whether the offending surgeries have been individually informed of the DoH statement sent to all PCTs. This says: **"We do not expect GPs to break existing contracts (with the phone provider), but they should not be entering new ones that would involve patients being charged more than for a local call"**.

The 0844 numbers are often mistakenly referred to as lo-call numbers. The price is fixed, at between 1p and 5p/minute; and they're often used for special services where providers get a cut of the call revenue. Although it is not a premium rated call, it is higher than a normal local call and we think it is costing patients 4.2p a minute.

Indeed, we have been told of one case where a patient paid £3 making contact with her GP. Enfield PCT says surgeries are using this telephone system as a tool to improve access and to divert patients to the most appropriate service using the options menu, such as asking for test results, make appointments or repeat prescriptions. They say that in the past some patients had experienced huge difficulties in getting through to practices by hearing the engaged signal each time they tried. The 0844 system connects them to the surgery and lets them know their number in the queue - they then have the option to stay on the phone or call back.

All 0844 calls are chargeable so if patients have a contract with their phone provider for free evening and weekend calls they will not be able to benefit and will be charged extra. The PCT says its complaints department has not been troubled with callers protesting about 0844 lines being used, but this could be because people prefer to suffer in silence to make contact with their surgery.

The Forum welcomes the DoH statement because we think it is wrong that surgeries are receiving a cut on incoming 0844 calls from patients, particularly elderly people on low incomes.

MORI are conducting an independent survey to selected patient's homes and ease of telephone access is one of the areas that is monitored with GPs receiving a financial reward based on the satisfaction result. **So it is important to let the pollsters know what you think of patients paying more to dial 0844.**



www.enfieldover50sforum.com

Adult learning remains important - Minister tells Forum

"I would like to reassure you that we recognise the importance of adult learning in meeting a range of social and community needs. We remain fully committed to ensuring that individuals of all ages, can benefit from a wide range of learning opportunities, including learning for its own sake, for personal fulfilment and to sustain an active role in the community".

This is part of a long letter sent to the Forum by David Lammy MP, parliamentary under-secretary of state for skills, which said that the government is continuing to safeguard the budget for adult community learning at £210 million a year for the next three years, which Mr Lammy contrasted with a real cut of 14% in funding between 1993 and 1997.

But there will be no increase in the £210 million for inflation or anything else and this static funding situation means that we have been unable to get an increase in Enfield's £444,000 grant because that would require in Mr Lammy's words **"redistribution at the expense of other boroughs"**. However, the terms of this year's grant to Enfield Council includes a significant change in that it requires them to show evidence of a planning process with local partners and how this will contribute to meeting local area agreement (LAA) targets.

Forum representatives on the various thematic action groups and the strategic partnership board will therefore now have the task of trying to reconcile Mr Lammy's support for learning **"for its own sake for personal fulfilment and sustain an active role in the community"** with meeting LAA targets which does include improving the quality of life for older people.

To help them we need the input of Forum members concerned about the loss of adult learning opportunities. Specifically, we need to know what courses you would like to see either restored or started in August - and what percentage of the course cost you are prepared to pay. Concessions will not be available based on age, except for those receiving income support or other help.

Please e-mail your response on courses and costs to meth.m@sky.com

Meanwhile, we will continue the campaign for more equitable adult and community learning funding between Enfield (£443,809), Waltham Forest (£1,764,816) and Haringey (£2,131,411) through the London region of the Learning & Skills Council.

Extra-ordinary General Meeting Tuesday 29 January single Agenda item

Proposed amendment to replace the existing aims in the Forum constitution with the following:

"To relieve elderly persons in the London Borough of Enfield who are in need by reason of their financial circumstances, physical or mental health and by providing a framework of support for older people to help them remain independent and healthy."

Membership Application Form

Surname	
First Name(s)	
Organisation*	
Address	
Post Code	
Phone Number	
Email	

* Not applicable if joining as an individual or a couple.

(I/We/My Club) wish(es) to apply for membership of the Enfield Borough Over 50s Forum. Enclosed is a payment of (£5.00 individual membership; £7.50 for couples; £12.50 for clubs). Cheques should be made payable to Enfield Borough Over 50s Forum. (Delete as appropriate)

Signed:

Please return this application form to Olivia Goodfellow, Development Officer, Enfield Borough Over 50s Forum, 19 Wades Hill, Winchmore Hill, N21 1BD. or hand in at a Forum Meeting.

Please tick here if a receipt is required. Receipts are not usually sent as a full membership list is available at meetings.

How did you hear about the Forum?

Or

Who introduced you?

URGENT

Members are asked to complete and return this voting slip by 26 January 2008

Concil Tax Voting Slip

I am in favour of 3-year CT freeze for all pensioners irrespective of their income.

I wish to leave things as they are and for the Forum to campaign for CT to be based on the ability to pay.

Add your name and address below and hand it to a Forum member/ Committee member or post to Over 50s Forum, Salisbury House, Bury West Street, Edmonton, London N9 9LA

Name.....

Address.....

.....Post Code

Published by Enfield Borough Over 50s Forum.

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Web site: www.enfieldover50sforum.org.uk