

## **Brampton and District 50+ Forum**

Report of the meeting held on Tuesday 20 November 2007 in Brampton Community Centre.

45 members were present for lunch and nearly 60 attended the meeting.

In the absence of Maureen Granville, Ann Oswin took the chair and after welcoming the members informed them of news, forthcoming events and projects.

- North Cumbrian Heritage Project. Low Luckens Centre are keen to locate people with knowledge of old farming crafts, stories, old woodland skills, songs and dances, etc. with a view to passing on these skills to children. If anyone else is interested in taking part - some interest was shown at the Forum meeting - please give details to Ann.
- Local events at the community centre.  
Tea Dance, Wed 21st November; Ceilidh and concert, Sun 25th November.  
Local Film Club, 'Stranger than fiction', 7:30pm Thu 29th November (admission free on this occasion).  
Launch of the 'Walking' leaflet, part of the Healthy Lives project, 10:30am Fri 7 December. A short walk followed by lunch at the centre; a quiz night that evening in the community cafe.  
Brampton Junior School Choir, 11:15am Thu 13 December.
- Information from Kate Allen: the public transport telephone number has changed to 0871 2002233.  
Information about Rural Wheels can be obtained from the desk.
- Help the Aged campaigns:  
Post Office closures. Consultation takes place in March 2008. See a Forum committee member if you would like the Forum to be involved.  
Homes - the future for older people. Write to the Housing minister, Yvette Cooper, to have your say on the standards for new housing suitable for older people.  
Pavements. Report problems to Help the Aged, a leaflet is available.  
Charges for care. A Green Paper on old people's care and paying for it is due next year. Recently Help the Aged backed an action against a county council for lack of consultation about increased charges for care. We should let our views be known.

Dr Weaving, senior partner in the Brampton surgery, then spoke about the proposed changes to local health care. He made reference to the 'Closer to home' booklet which is available (copies from Brampton surgery). He described some of the changes he had seen in the last 20 years - shorter waiting times for a hip replacement means that now fewer people are housebound. He suggested that being rural was not an excuse for Cumbria finances being in a mess but that running 4 hospitals when the population base supports only one causes difficulties. Patients are referred to hospital more often in Cumbria than elsewhere; patients stay longer in hospital because of poor community services. These were two areas being addressed by the new chief executive, Sue Page. The new proposals put more responsibility on local community services to solve problems. This is important for Brampton. Dr Weaving explained that the Brampton Surgery and Moot Lodge were in outdated buildings with limited access and facilities. A new single site for the surgery, hospital and residential care was needed. Members asked about: a location - several possibilities were suggested; funding - from several sources, but not profit-making; and timescale - Dr Weaving thought 18 months. Dr Weaving then answered specific questions and listened to members' comments on a range of related topics.

After thanking Dr Weaving, Ann Oswin suggested that members write to the Primary Care Trust or their local councillor to express their point of view. 4th January 2008 is the closing day for submissions.

The second speaker, Julian Legat, director of adult social care in Cumbria, outlined some of his ideas for increasing engagement with the ever-increasing numbers of users of the care system. There is already postal consultation and a citizen's panel but he saw the Forum playing a part - he would like to visit us again - and also community-based internet sites. He wants particularly to improve contact with the 'hard to reach' groups. The questions which followed covered a range of issues including: planning consent for small bungalows; advocacy service; sensible segregation - not everything under one roof; not a geriatric centre - housing for the whole age range; continuity of care; valuing care workers.

The meeting ended with tea and biscuits. **The next 50+ Forum meeting is on Tuesday 22 January 2008.**