

Brampton and District 50+ Forum

Report of the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 20 May 2008 in Brampton Community Centre.

20 members were present for lunch; 28 attended the meeting.

Apologies were received from Maureen Granville. Ann Oswin took the Chair and after welcoming the members and guest speakers distributed copies of the annual report. The Forum is in the process of acquiring a computer which will be sited in the community centre. Funds are being provided by Laurel House and Adult Social Care. The computer system will be insured and security arrangements will be put in place.

Financial statement: The Forum currently has about £877, similar to last year. The day to day running costs are more or less covered by the £2.50 paid by members at meetings.

Committee: Most of the present committee are willing to stand, viz. Maureen Granville (chair), Ann Oswin (vice-chair), Ivan Whetton (secretary), Doris Watson (treasurer), Aureole Charteris-Hough, Leonard James, Jean Taylor, Frances Thompson. It was proposed (Ann) and seconded (Ivan) that they be re-elected. The meeting was in agreement. Elaine Thompson would be the new representative from Age Concern. Four new committee members were proposed, seconded and accepted: Frank Bryer, Janet Blakeman, Ena Hutchinson, Audrey Bowers.

Len James proposed thanks to Ann Oswin and to the members responsible for the catering arrangements for all their hard work; this was supported by the meeting.

Ann and later Jean Taylor gave updates and information about leaflets on: bus concessions; Forum to Forum newsletter (Help the Aged); Age Concern insurance; Help the Aged campaign survey; Low Luckens Organic Resource Centre special weekend breaks; national Falls Awareness day - 24th June - events in the Brampton Community Centre; VAT relief for disabled people (call HMRC 0845 010 9000 for a leaflet); local respite care facilities; Arthritis Care (0808 800 4050)

www.arthritiscare.org.uk

Joanna Leith, Director, Age Concern, Carlisle and District then addressed the meeting. After giving a brief history of Age Concern, she explained the new structure of service being offered by Age Concern: Day centres and lunch clubs; an information advice service; an 'adequacy service' helping people to deal with day to day problems; a 'prevention service' providing support for maintaining healthy, active lives and staying independent; a 'brokerage service' for example helping the socially isolated to make contacts or take up old interests; a 'bridge-building service' where a volunteer helps someone reconnect with members of the local community; 'social enterprise' - a not-for-profit organisation that provides services in the community. As well as having salaried staff, Age Concern has a large number of volunteers and is always looking for more. Joanna also told us that there are discussions about the possible merging of Age Concern and Help the Aged.

Julian Legat of Adult Social Care then described the differences in approach to care that government were trying to introduce. The key changes of 'In Control' involve a right to self-determination, with individuals having greater control over the nature of their care and receiving individual budgets to fund it rather than the decisions being made by someone else. Some members expressed concern that many elderly would not be able to cope with the setting up of their support. Brokerage services would be needed and the cost of these would inevitably come out of the allowance allocated leaving less for actual care.

The meeting ended with tea and biscuits.

The next 50+ Forum meeting is on Tuesday 22 July 2008.