

Brampton and District 50+ Forum

Report of the meeting held on Tuesday 21 July 2009 in Brampton Community Centre.

24 members were present for lunch and 27 at the meeting. Apologies were received from Ena and Gilbert Hutchinson and Audrey Bowers.

The Chair, Ann Oswin, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

She then provided information on the latest news, updates and campaigns.

- 'Building a Society for all ages' - a government strategy document. The deadline for feedback is 12th October. The possibility of an additional Forum meeting to discuss the document was mooted. The strategy includes: a package, 'Active at 60' with intergenerational projects, digital inclusion projects, and 50+ employment.
- Age Concern: an NHS booklet on car parking; a principle of 'fair for all not free for all' is being promoted.
- Stroke care funding is changing but does seem to be ring-fenced.
- Forums in the South West have produced a booklet giving information about issues whose outcomes they have influenced and encouraging other groups to be active.
- The car parking booklet, the latest editions of 'Activate' magazine and the 'Forum to Forum' newsletter are available.

Anyone wishing for more information on any of the above items should contact Ann Oswin. Members were asked about their experiences with the digital switchover; no problems were reported.

Ann then introduced the guest speaker, Jane Macfarlane of LINK.

Jane, who is local to the area and was educated in Brampton, explained the role of Cumbria Local Involvement Network (LINK). This is network of about 800 members, all with an interest in local health and social care services. It provides a means of passing on your experiences and for presenting your ideas for improving the services. This is especially important where individuals may be afraid to raise an issue in case a service is withdrawn. LINK can offer support where there is a problem of general interest. Jane gave one recent example: a proposal has been that a bus service should stop at the Sands Centre to give better access for those not driving a car. LINK is finding out what support there would be for this. Jane encouraged members to join LINK and Ann proposed that the Brampton 50+ Forum join. This was seconded by William Watson and others and there was general agreement from the meeting.

The members were particular interested when the discussion turned to the Brampton community hospital development. Ann was to attend a 'health impact assessment' meeting on Thursday 23 July. The leaflet provided for her meeting included a brief discussion about the two proposed sites, the Green Lane site and the Kingwater site. Some Forum members were sceptical about the consultation process and thought that cost would be the overriding factor with other relevant points, including the possibility for later expansion and the likely loss of community centre facilities, being ignored. Members were directly asked for their opinion about which of the two sites they would prefer. A large majority indicated a preference for the Kingwater site.

Ann thanked Jane and the meeting ended with tea and biscuits.

The next 50+ Forum meeting is on Tuesday 22 September 2009.