

Brampton and District 50+ Forum

Report of the meeting held on Tuesday 22 November 2011 in Brampton Community Centre.

12 members were present for lunch and 15 members attended the meeting.

The chair, Ann Oswin, welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave updates on local issues:

- Cumbria Health On Call (CHOC), which replaced CueDoc, has moved from Hilltop Heights and now has floor for emergencies at the Cumberland Infirmary. This allows them to work more closely with A&E. Before the end of the year they are hoping to have a new unit for heart treatment. The contact number for CHOC is 03000 247 247.
- 2 new leaflets are available: *How to look after mental health through exercise* and *Healthy Heart Kit* (British Heart Foundation). Copies are available in the community centre.
- Blue Badge: There is now a £10 administration charge for a new Blue Badge or for a renewal. The badge is valid for three years. [Members at the meeting thought this was reasonable.]
- The December Quiz is now available at the community centre.
- During Infection prevention week (last week) there was no MRSA at either the Cumberland Infirmary or West Cumberland Hospital and there was a reduced number of cases of C.dif.
- A new change being proposed for the NHS - that the Health Minister would not be responsible - has caused some concern. Who would be accountable to the public? The issue is being discussed in parliament.

The meeting then looked at two websites:

- County Council Online Directory of services. When complete this will list details of all organisations / companies offering services which different groups of individuals might find useful. We looked at how older people with particular needs might search the directory to find help. The directory will only be useful to those people able to use the internet (a computers are available in the community centre and at the Brampton library). It needs to be comprehensive and kept up-to-date, and service providers needs to have been vetted.
- Woodland walks: a website which allows you to search for details of woodland with public access in a particular locality.

Ann then introduced our speaker, Alison Cheetham, Chairperson of Brampton Business Association. She told us about her career before the setting up of her business, Half Moon Wholefoods. She then described how she had become involved in the Brampton Business Association and how this organisation together with others in the Brampton Economic Partnership were trying to promote Brampton and improve the town centre. One project aimed at reducing the use of plastic bags, and a reusable bag with the Moot Hall as a logo had been produced. Alison reported that most businesses have survived the recession through people using the town. She was keen to promote 'Shopping local'. Local shops support Fairtrade and can tell you about their products; most try to source products locally. Local shopkeepers are also residents so, as well as making a living, take a pride in the town and its appearance. Questions from members covered a range of topics from the lack of availability of women's underwear and men's socks to the problems of litter from takeaways (none belong to the Brampton Business Association) . There was also discussion of parking, shoppers from out of town, tourists, the closing of the WI stall in the Moot Hall.

Two events in Brampton in the run-up to Christmas:

Friday 25 November, the Christmas lights will be switched on;

Saturday 17th December, shopkeepers will be dressing up.

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

The next 50+ Forum meeting is on Tuesday 24th January 2012.