

Brampton and District 50+ Forum

Report of the meeting held on Tuesday 27 March 2012 in Brampton Community Centre.

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

The chair, Ann Oswin, welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave updates on several campaigns and initiatives:

- Cumbria Warm Homes 'Hot Spots' offers help with boiler maintenance and energy bills. Contacts for this are:
Gemma Barnes, Cumbria Rural Enterprise Agency (help with heating system) - 01539 726624
Thomas Armstrong Services (emergency and out of hours boiler repairs) - 07967 340567
Winter Warmth Fund (help with energy bills) - 01900 825760
- Age UK updates:
Amy Charters of Age UK (0203 0331081) is looking for case studies of people who have had a fall to show the importance of falls prevention services. If you or someone you know has had a fall and this has affected your or their quality of life, or if you have benefited from a falls prevention service, please contact her. The survey continues until July 2012.
The Royal College of Physicians has produced the results of two national audits on falls and bone health in older people and on continence care. The first explains how falls clinics and prevention services are important and how fractures from falls put older people at greater risk of dying and how dealing with such fractures are very costly. Dealing with fractures resulting from bone thinning costs £2bn per year. The college has produced a booklet* to help overcome the potential embarrassment of discussing continence care with healthcare staff.
- Age UK conference in Chorley, 20th March. Ann attended on our behalf. One speaker encouraged all older people to have a voice, but the problem of maintaining a high forum membership was common throughout the north-west. Another session focussed on '*Securing dignity for people in care and in hospital*'. This report lists 10 key recommendations for care homes and hospitals*. One speaker had suggested that these should be requirements. Another session, '*My clothes are not our clothes*' also concerned dignity.
- The monthly quiz is available at Brampton Community Centre reception, £1.
- Saturday 21st April, a table top sale, Brampton Community Centre.

Joan Bailey of Carlisle and Eden Age UK told us of the monthly drop-in sessions run in conjunction with the Eden Valley Hospice at the Crown and Mitre, Carlisle. The next is on 25th April. Joan's colleague, Heather then asked members if they would help her by completing a questionnaire about receiving prepared meals.

Ann then introduced our speaker, Brigid Robinson, occupational therapist at the Brampton Hospital. After explaining the difference between OT and physiotherapy, Brigid described some of the ways people are helped to regain their former level of functionality in everyday activities. This included both finding easier techniques for performing a task or using equipment to help. The range of equipment available, where it can be obtained locally*, the process of assessment, funding (equipment assessed as essential is obtained on prescription, funding is from social services), and disposal / recycling of equipment were all discussed with many members asking questions or giving their experiences. Equipment discussed included: types of bath seats, chair-raising castors, 'helping hand' (a claw on a stick), a sock aid, rails for beds and toilets, invalid toilet seats, perch stools, shower stools, 'hot cup' (a kettle substitute), handles for electrical plugs, devices for opening jars, swivel seats for getting out of cars. Nottingham Rehabilitation Services (0845 606 0911) have a catalogue.

After thanks had been given in the usual way, the meeting ended with tea and biscuits.

The next 50+ Forum meeting, the AGM, is on Tuesday 22nd May 2012.

* Further information, including links, can be found on our webpages:
http://www.bramptonandbeyond.org/index.php?group_name=50plusforum