

Brampton and District 50+ Forum

Report of the meeting held on Tuesday 21 July 2015 in Brampton Community Centre. 22 members took lunch in the community café; 29 members attended the meeting which followed - an encouraging turnout.

The Vice-Chair, Ann Oswin, welcomed members and the guest speakers and gave several reminders and updates:

- The community centre has Quiz Cards for £1 at reception.
- Home-made greetings cards are available in café; pay at reception.
- There is a consultation process re general practice and the commissioning process taking place. We may devote the next Forum to this.
- Sat 22 August at Kirklington Hall: a fund-raising event on behalf of the earthquake victims in Nepal. If you would like to attend and don't have transport, let Ann know.

David Shepherd, with some assistance from Margaret and Harry Simpson, then gave a short talk about the 'Bus Buddy' scheme. This began in Clitheroe, Lancashire and is aimed at people who have a bus pass but are nervous about using it. The aim is not to chaperone people but to form a network of people who give each other confidence about going out and about on the public bus service and to encourage companionship, especially between people who feel isolated. So far 12 people are involved in Brampton; they have made 3 trips so far, the furthest to Newcastle. One problem raised by Forum members is the lack of any bus service near where they live. David told us that they were trying to form a link with Border Rambler, the scheme hopefully being developed to get outlying people into Brampton using a minibus with volunteer drivers. The group offers help in understanding timetables and also welcomes those who are used to buses, acting as companions to the elderly. A leaflet is available in the community centre. Margaret or Harry can be contacted on Brampton (016977) 2579, David on Brampton (016977) 2853.

Heather Tipler then gave a talk, illustrated by photographs, about the Lovers' Lane Community Garden, which is located below Murray Park near the Sands in Brampton. It was started in 2012 as part of Sustainable Brampton. The group were looking for an allotment and were offered this field which had previously been used for horses and sheep but which had been an allotment during World War I. The layout and logo, designed by Fiona Bullock a local garden designer, were agreed with the owner and some basic rules - no bonfires, no gardening in the dark - were drawn up. Those wanting to join pay an annual fee of £10 and sign up to the rules. A record is kept of what each member does - each has different strengths and weaknesses. The aim is to be self sufficient in vegetables, salad and herbs throughout the year. This is possible because of the poly-tunnel. Planning permission for this was costly and took several months to obtain. There are 15 members so far this year; other work is done by community payback people. A link with local schools and Riverside tenants is being sought. You are encouraged to have a look - there is usually someone present on Saturdays from 2-4pm. More men are needed - for their different ideas, we were told.

The speakers were thanked in the usual way and the meeting ended with tea and biscuits.

The next Forum meeting will be on Tuesday 22 September 2015.