

Brampton and District 50+ Forum

Report of the meeting held on Tuesday 25 April 2017 in Brampton Community Centre. The meeting took place after lunch in the community café; 19 people attended the meeting.

The Chair, Carol Saunders, introduced the guest speaker, Alister Neville, a local artist who works in wood.

Alister described, with the aid of slides, how he had first come to the area in the 1990s to learn his craft whilst working on a project at a what was then a children's crèche in Union Lane. This involved creating wooden animals for a play area and vivid decorations for the side of the house. He was also involved in creating a children's play area behind St Martin's. Much of his work has involved designing and making seating and wooden animals for woodland walks. He showed us images of work done at Talkin Tarn and in Gelt Woods. There were individual seats, totem poles and a woodpecker that several Forum members remembered seeing. He has also done work in junior schools, with pupils not only providing ideas but also getting hands-on experience. We were shown slides of decorated wooden crosses, an outdoor shelter (at Lanercost School), and a wide range of animals and birds, including hedgehogs, dogs and a giraffe.

Alister recently held a wood-carving workshop in the Hut and he supervises a more regular group at Roadhead. Several members expressed an interest in joining a wood-carving course. Alister then answered questions whilst sheets of photographs from his portfolio were passed around and we learnt that he prefers oak and sweet chestnut for durability, lime is more easily carved, and elm and cherry provide interesting grain effects.

Work in progress is a garden at the entrance to the community centre which will have 'bees' as its theme. He is planning this with his partner, Fiona, and the project will also involve local primary school children.

More of Alister's work can be seen online at: www.alisterneville.blogspot.com

After the Chair had thanked Alister for his talk Kate Allan gave us some information about the Hallbankgate Hub, an enterprise which has replaced the co-op there. She also had updates about Rural Wheels, Dial-a-Ride and the voluntary social car scheme, all of which provide transport to help reduce rural isolation.

See the 'Links' page of our website 50plusforum.bramptoncumbria.uk/links.php for more information.

Carol Brack from Age UK reminded us of the Reach Project, which is now in its second year (of 3). Through the scheme Carol and her colleagues are able to visit older people to do a survey to see if they are getting the best quality of life in their own home, the aim being to reduce rural isolation. They are able to provide advice in getting home loans or disability loans, are able to put you in touch with other agencies, are able to help in filling out forms. Several Forum members described difficulties they had filling out the form to obtain a Blue Badge. Ring the local Age UK office - 01228 536673 to make an appointment.

After the meeting refreshments were available in the café.

The next Forum meeting, the AGM, will be held on Tuesday 6 June 2017.