

# Wandsworth Older People's Forum Newsletter & Annual Report 2014

Spring 2015

## Inside this issue:

Stop burglaries	2
Loneliness	2
Your Day Your Say	3
Care Act in local	3
WHARF	3
Annual Report	4-5
Be a Trainer	
Keep Active	5
Places to go	6
Age UK AGM	7
Co-op	7
Inter-generational	7
How to join	8
Future Meetings	8

## Access to Pension Funds—Warning

It may be wise to wait beyond 1st April to withdraw funds from pension pots until advice and appropriate products become available.

## Reduced cash for Social Care

Spending on social care for people aged 65 and over has fallen by a fifth in England over the last 10 years.

## Quality Social and Emotional Care for Mentally Frail Older People in Hospital



Nicci Gerrard (pictured) has started a campaign to enable carers to accompany relatives with dementia to hospital, (in the way parents are enabled to accompany small children). Hundreds of responses, many from people whose own older relatives have struggled with being in hospital, support the idea that carers, who are known to and trusted by the older person, should be able to help with personal care, feeding and general reassurance. Having just spent two weeks by the hospital bedside of my own 93 year old mother I fully understand this. Any change of environment or care givers is very upsetting and disorientating for a frail older person. Being in hospital reduced my mum's ability to think straight so she could not answer health professionals' questions without my support. The ward preferred me to stick to visiting hours and when I was not there one morning, my mum got out of bed without ringing the bell, forgot to use her frame and fell while she was in the toilet. The staff were mortified but I did not blame them. They could not have been more caring and hardworking but they had other needy patients to deal with and the system is under so much pressure.

In the experience of Nicci Gerrard and many of her co-campaigners, a stay in hospital can reduce mental capacity, continence and mobility – all key to an older person's quality of life. Older people who need help to mobilise have to sit on a chair or in bed, except to go to the loo. They cannot afford let alone understand how to work the complicated tv/radio/phone system so have minimal stimulation. Not using their minds or their legs for a few weeks understandably leads to problems.

Of course, there are sadly many older people who do not have family carers or friends with time to spend in hospital with them but carers who do come in could ensure more time for the hospital staff to deal with those who are unaccompanied.

*Jenny Weinstein*



# Ending Loneliness

Lilias Gillies and Su Elliott represented the forum at a conference run by the Campaign to End Loneliness which is supported by some 600 groups nationally. An excellent address from Professor Christina Victor on Loneliness across the Life Course included statistics such as that the percentage of people who always feel lonely aged 15-24 is 5% and for 65+ is 9%. A worrying 30% of people in all age groups feel lonely most of the time. A film featuring interviews with lonely people showed how attending a group, receiving a visitor or receiving a phone call made a significant difference. One group reported on their partnership project with pharmacists to identify lonely people when they come for repeat prescriptions. It was pointed out that identifying lonely people was only useful if they could then be sign posted to services or activities to provide social engagement.



## Redclyffe joins Abbeyfield

Popular voluntary sector care home Redclyffe, situated in Furzedown, transferred to the Abbeyfield Society, in December after 65 years serving older people under the banner of Richard Cusden Homes. Abbeyfield provides sheltered housing, residential and dementia care throughout the UK. Redclyffe which has been increasingly specialising in dementia care is a welcome addition to Abbeyfield. Over the last year parts of the Redclyffe building have been extended and improved and Abbeyfield plans to add further residents' accommodation in due course. Speaking on behalf of the former Richard Cusden Homes Trustees, Val Moeri says "We are delighted to have found a highly regarded and well-established organisation, which shares our values and beliefs about older people's care. Abbeyfield has the expertise and scope which we believe will enable Redclyffe to continue to thrive and develop even further as a really good place for residents and staff to live and work"

## How to prevent burglary

1. Leave a light on if house empty after dark.
2. Use both a chubb and yale lock on front/back doors.
3. If you have sash windows, get them rebeaded (if required) and ensure the frames are not rotten. A common entry method is simply lifting the glazing out of sash windows.
4. Make sure your side gate is locked and consider trellising on top to make it hard to climb over.
5. Cut down hedges in your front garden to remove the opportunity of burglars concealing themselves.
6. Join or start a neighbourhood watch scheme - this could reduce insurance premiums.
7. Security mark valuable property - take photos and record all relevant reference/index numbers.
8. Consider purchasing an alarm or even a fake alarm box - or fix a security flood light to the front/rear of your property.
9. If residing in a multi-occupancy dwelling, ensure the main access door is always closed and locked.
10. Ask local Police to come round and conduct a free security survey of your home!
11. Consider blinds/curtains to prevent offenders looking through windows at your personal property.
12. A gravel drive helps deter night time creepers.

For more info email : [WW-WDSNTTeamC@met.police.uk](mailto:WW-WDSNTTeamC@met.police.uk)



# Your Day Your Say 2014

### Adult Social Services Consults Service Users and Carer

At the third annual meeting for carers and users of Wandsworth's adult services held in November at the Civic Suite over 100 participants were addressed



by Kerry Stevens, Assistant Director of Education and Social Services, who spoke about some of the achievements of the last year. These are set out in a document called the Local Account, a progress report which Social Services departments produce annually for their stakeholders. All attendees were given a copy of the summary and the full document is available online on the Council's website. The two main challenges faced by the Department were identified as the further significant savings required

by the Government in 2015 and, at the same time, the implementation of the Care Act 2014.

The main provisions of the Care Act were outlined by Patrick Hall from the Social Care Institute for Excellence. The key changes which come into force in April 2015 include an emphasis on prevention and promotion of well-being, the provision for everyone who has care needs to have an assessment, including self funders and carers, new national criteria of eligibility for services aimed to end what is thought to be the current 'post code lottery', a statutory requirement to provide personal budgets and a duty on the Council to develop the market in local services. Other parts of the Act such as the £72,000 cap on the amount anyone has to pay for care will not come into force until April 2016.

Service users and carers worked in groups to discuss and feedback their own priorities.

Clear accessible information was deemed essential and the prospect of more preventive services was well received. The role of the voluntary sector was considered vital in working to support the Council in these areas. The right of carers to an assessment was welcomed as long as relevant services were available to meet assessed needs.

Cllr Claire Clay, closed by thanking everyone for their



participation and inviting them to contact her with any feedback which would inform her Committee's scrutiny of local services.

### WHARF



Wandsworth Housing Adaptation and Repairs Forum (WHARF) offers support to older, and disabled people with problems like:

- Emergency boiler repairs in cases of extreme hardship
- grab or other rails in the home
- radiator foils or bleeding inefficient radiators
- Ramps
- Assistance changing energy providers
- Fitting fire safety precautions around the home
- Befriending service

### Care Act implementation in Wandsworth

Council Officers told the Forum's January Network Conference that the new eligibility criteria equate with Wandsworth's current policy; urgent need is already met by rehabilitation beds, live in care, a sit in service; systems are in place to monitor and improve care quality; and relevant IT systems are being established.



# Forum Annual Report

by Lilias Gillies



## Older People's Strategy for Wandsworth

Wandsworth's Older People's Strategy, compiled by the Council and the local NHS in collaboration with partners and stakeholders, sets out a vision for improving the health, welfare and quality of life for older people in Wandsworth.

Representatives of Wandsworth Older People's Forum and Network played a key role in discussing with the Council the content of a successor Older People's Strategy (2015-2020) to follow

the one which ended in 2013. The Older People's Network, which represents numerous older people's organizations in the Borough met at a Conference in July to share their views about priorities for the strategy which had been gathered from their stakeholders. Tackling loneliness and isolation, information about and access to services and facilities to encourage and enable social engagement were seen as critical to a successful strategy. These views were taken to the Strategy Group for Older People on which providers and local organisations are represented and incorporated into a draft strategy published on the Council's website in January 2015. The document sets out the values we all wished to pursue, what had been achieved in the previous five years and what remained to be done and further feedback from the public was sought.

## Funding and Finance

The Forum started the year with serious discussions about how to live within budget as we had



Tony Tuck chairs network meeting on strategy

spent all the reserve which had supplemented income over several years. This had enabled the 8 page newsletter in colour and disability support for Network conferences. Our current

income consists of a grant from Wandsworth Council, membership subscriptions, donations and legacies. Economies included reducing administrative support, cutting the newsletter to four pages and printing in black and white.

## Outreach work

The Comic Relief grant for outreach work to small groups of older people meeting in churches, community centres and sheltered housing ended in March 2014. Mac Downes, our outreach worker has continued contact with a few groups which were not strong enough to function without support. During the year, funding was raised from Charles Hayward Trust, Sanctuary Housing Association and CCG Seldom Heard Groups project and a programme of work is planned for 2015. This is entitled "Getting to know You" and consists of six fortnightly meetings with a number of groups, mostly in Roehampton.





# Forum Annual Report (cont.)

## Members` Meetings

An important role of the Forum is to hold monthly meetings for our members on issues of interest to older people and to disseminate the information more widely by sharing the knowledge gained through the Newsletter. This year, we featured Music and Wellbeing, Battersea Power Station development, Houses of Parliament Outreach, a Vision Strategy for Wandsworth and Falls Prevention. We had an excellent presentation on the way we should prepare for the end of our life, making a will

and appointing Executors and making arrangements for Power of Attorney in the event of becoming unable to take decisions. We held a hustings for the Council election in May and ended the year with songs from a group from Burntwood School along with a selection of poems read by members.

## Representation and Voice

Representatives of the Forum had regular meeting with the Council's Adult Social Services managers and attended Wandsworth Mobility Forum, the Health and Well-

being Board, the Environment Forum, Healthwatch, the monitoring group for actions to reduce excess winter deaths, Greater London Forum for Older People and many others. We have also responded to a number of consultations and surveys on issues concerning older people

such as changes to older people's mental health services and reform of primary

care services. We distributed a questionnaire with the September newsletter and analysed the results. This indicated that stakeholders felt that the most important role for the newsletter was to cover national and local issues concerning older people and to provide information about local services and activities.



## Become a Trainer

Kingston University and St George's University of London want you to help us on an innovative learning programme for pre-qualifying health and social care students to enable them to communicate more effectively with people with dementia. We are looking for people with dementia and/or their carers to join our steering group which meets no more than 5 times a year at St George's University. Users and carers are also needed to help with student awareness of how dementia affects people and those close to them. We would welcome people who are willing to speak to small or large groups and people who would be willing to sit on a panel to answer questions. Expenses will be paid.



For more information please contact: Dr Julia Wood on  
Tel.: 020 8725 0380 or Mobile: 07771 944523

## Good News!

Wandsworth Council will renew the grant to the Wandsworth Older People's Network with a reduction of 15%. We are delighted that they will support us to continue our work and will continue to try and raise additional funds for our activities.

# Fit, Active, Involved and Interested

Asian Women's Association  
020 8875 9465

Wandsworth Over 50s Activity Group 07958 440 808

Share Community for adults with physical and other disabilities.  
020 7924 2949

St. Bede's Centre for Deaf people  
020 7021 4340

Golf for over 50s 020 8871 2468

St. Michael's Older people's Activity Centre Battersea  
020 7228 024

Expert Patients group - learn how to understand and manage condition or illness 020 8871 5163

Furzedown Project for older people 020 8677 4283  
Check us out on YOUTUBE

Ramblers 0207 9242949

Hestia Age Activity Centre  
020 8767 8426

Katherine Low Settlement meeting place, advice, support & activities for older people  
020 7223 2845/6471

Pocklington Resource Centre for People with Visual Impairments  
020 8675 4246

GP Patient groups (at many surgeries) enable you to have your say about how your doctors work.

Regenerat-Rise open access day centre, Putney 020 8780 9330

Line Dancing Newlands Hall Putney Vale Tuesdays 11am -12.30 1st week free then £5 per week St. Michael's Older People's Activity Centre Battersea 0207 228 0245

Active Lifestyles for info on a range of fun activities 0208 871 6373

U3A (university of 3rd age) Learning through groups such as language, history, art, theatre, walks 020 8878 5783

Socialising in Roehampton. For more info contact Mac 07715 131 813

## Brand New at Battersea Arts Centre

Dance Class and Social event for over 60s, in March, Tuesdays from 11am - 2 pm £1 includes refreshments. Contact **Rose Alexander Community Projects Coordinator 020 7326 8257**



## Keeping Active all your Life

It is absolutely vital that we do enough physical activity to keep healthy. Louise McGregor, physiotherapist at St George's and Queen Mary Hospitals, told Forum Members that they don't have to go to the gym but can do enough physical activity day to day through housework, gardening, walking, or using stairs. She emphasised the dangers of sitting too long whether it is at a computer or in an armchair. We must stand up from time to time and do some stretches. It is even more effective if our activity is enough to make us a little breathless but still able to talk. Not enough activity increases the chances of diabetes and coronary disease. After a hospital stay people who require help to get back to their previous level of functioning may be offered intermediate care in Queen Mary Hospital or Ronald Gibson House. After a fall or fracture physiotherapy is available at St John's Therapy Centre and other clinics around the borough. There are exercise classes in leisure centres and older people's centres, the NHS website suggests exercises you can do at home and AgeUK has an exercise leaflet. You are never too old to start and once you start you should not stop.



## AGM

Four users of Age UK Wandsworth told over two hundred attendees at the 2014 AGM held in the Civic Suite about the benefits to their lives of Age UK services such as information and advice, shopping, getting out and about and the helpful handy person. One user talked about how she had reciprocated by asking guests at her 85th birthday to donate to Age UK rather than give presents. Another user read poems from her published book.

The Annual Report shows how, despite ongoing cuts to its funding, the organisation manages to survive through assiduous fund raising, innovative ideas and the support of 200 volunteers.

## The Celebrity Cast

I am one of a group of 6th form students from Streatham & Clapham High School who have been visiting residents at Wimborne House.

As well as playing scrabble, making loom bands, baking and helping with computer skills we have been reminiscing with residents.

Ted (94) was a musician in the Fire Service Band, who was presented with a Civil Defence Medal by King George which he proudly wore to the reminiscence session. His career included working in Guy's Hospital in the Intensive Care Unit, becoming Pearly King for Wandsworth and Vice President of Gillingham Ladies' Football Club.

However he claims that the highlight of his life was the 6 weeks he spent after his knee replacement. Ted proudly presented the plaster cast he had worn, filled with around 50 signatures, including those of Sir Richard Branson, who gave Ted a donation whilst he was Pearly King, Sir Cliff Richard, Terry Wogan, (who

worked with Ted during a comedy act), Bruce Forsyth, Sarah Greene, Danny La Rue and Diana, Princess of Wales – a particular favourite whom Ted referred to as 'Di'. He claimed that a newspaper once offered him £5,000 for the cast but Ted refused to part with it.



It is clear that reminiscing about his past with young volunteers made Ted happier and reminded him of the forgotten joys that he once experienced.

Talking to Ted has made me realise that everyone, has a story to tell. Through reminiscence sessions with the youth of today, generations can exchange experiences and views, bringing our community closer together. Volunteering is truly rewarding. Ellen To

## Sandwich Generation

I am officially a 'club sandwich' - someone in their 50s, 60s or 70s who helps out with grandchild care and also looks after their 'very old' parents. For six years my partner and I made a weekly ninety minute journey to care for two of our grandchildren now aged 6 and 3. It has been wonderful to be part of their lives and to be there for Xmas shows and first days at school, but it is a big commitment. In the school holidays, we travel even further to the West country to care for our other 3 grandkids.

In the last couple of years, caring has been increased by the needs of my 93 year old mum whom we supported as long as possible in her own home, managing her household, shopping and carers, taking cooked meals every week and coping with her unhappiness about increased dependence.

Looking after an aging parent is challenging both practically and emotionally. I have never liked admin and now I have to do hers as well as mine because I have Power of Attorney - a big responsibility.

Emotionally, it was really hard for my mum to give up her independence and, inevitably she took a lot of the anger out on me. This is hard to take when you are trying so hard to help but I know from so many friends that this is a common problem. I often wonder what will happen when everyone works till they are 67. Who will do the child care and support US?

Jenny Weinstein



## Voice for Older People in Wandsworth

Correspondence to  
Hon.secretary  
Lilias Gillies  
6, Fircroft Road,  
London SW17 7PS

Tel:020 8672 5592

Email

[Lilias.gillies@btinternet.com](mailto:Lilias.gillies@btinternet.com)

### Newsletter editor:

Jenny Weinstein  
[jennyweinstein@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:jennyweinstein@tiscali.co.uk)

### Membership secretary

Su Elliott  
[su.elliott2@virgin.net](mailto:su.elliott2@virgin.net)

### Outreach worker

Mac Downes  
[macdownes@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:macdownes@tiscali.co.uk)

### We're on the Web

[www.wandspensforum.org.uk](http://www.wandspensforum.org.uk)



**Wandsworth**

Funded by Wandsworth Council

**NPC**  
NATIONAL PENSIONERS CONVENTION

Affiliated to National Pensioners' Convention

**NEWS NEWS NEWS**

Wandsworth and Richmond Councils will share a staffing structure under one Chief Executive from April 1st to secure services within reduced budgets.

## Forthcoming Forum Meetings

All meetings are held at the Anchor Centre, Garratt Lane and start at 2pm and end at 4pm.

### April 14th

AGM with Cllr Stuart Thom the Mayor Manager of Southside, Neil Churchill

### May 12th

Michelle Welbourn Wandsworth Museum and James Morton, Health and Social Care Joint Commissioning

### June 9th

Malcolm Newton, Musical Director (RSC, National Theatre) on the piano. "What Do You See" film on Dementia

### July 14th

Charles Whitehead, Transition Towns "Heatwaves and vulnerable people"

If you would like to join or renew your subscription to the Wandsworth Older People's Forum, please complete the subscription form below and return with your payment of £5 (annual subscription for individuals or organizations) to:

Membership Secretary Wandsworth Older People's Forum  
C/O WCEN, DRCA Charlotte Despard Ave, London SW11 5HD.

Name (individual or organization)

Address

..... postcode.....

phone (h).....

(mob).....

Email.....

I prefer correspondence/newsletter (tick preference).

by post

By e mail

I might be interested to volunteer

Make cheques payable to Wandsworth Older People's Forum