

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE MEMBER CHAMPION FOR OVER 50's – 2015/16

The London Borough of Havering has the highest proportion of residents over the age of 65 in London estimated at 45,340 people, which is approximately 18.5 per cent of the total Havering population (244,729). It is vital that this age group stays as active and independent for as long as possible.

Social Isolation Project

The Social Isolation Project has been set up to respond to the increasing issue of social isolation and loneliness in our Older Adult community. A Steering Group meets regularly to provide strategic direction and input. I am a member of that group which has enabled me to provide Member influence and support.

Adult Social Care, Strategy and Commissioning, has responded to this issue through the recruitment of the Social Inclusion Coordinator, Samantha Saunders.

Samantha Saunders is leading the Social Isolation Project with a small team of Community Navigators. The Community Navigators visit the Older Adult at home and spend time finding out about the Older Adult's life and interests. They then research what is going on in local community that may be of interest for each individual.

The Community Navigator can then provide practical advice and support to help the Older Adult overcome issue around going out of their home. This can include practical issue relating to booking Taxi's or Dial a Ride, and attending activities with the Older Adult to encourage them to meet new people.

The Project will work with 100 Older Adults who are in receipt of an Adult Social Care package and have been identified as socially isolated. The Project is running for 1 year and is currently 7 months into the process.

The project will run until November 2016 and within this time has very specific objectives to achieve;

- To understand the socially isolated community of Older Adults in Havering .
- Evaluate the effectiveness of a Personalised Social Isolation Intervention - The change in the service user's perception of their social isolation.

- Cost Effectiveness of Personalised Social Isolation Intervention – The cost of the Adult Social Care Packages and impact on the draw on health services.
- Assess the potential of the existing wider community resources as a method to address social isolation.
- Identify gaps in existing community resources to inform future market shaping to address social isolation with wider cohorts.
- Develop an effective intervention approach which is transferable to wider cohort and business as usual.

To date the project has received 217 referrals and the staff are currently working with 79 clients. The clients referred to the project have provided valuable information about our Havering Older Adult community and provided an understanding of the needs and challenges in supporting Older Adults to overcome the barriers causing social isolation.

The project also is developing a broad understanding of the wider community resources and compiling a spread sheet to populate 'Earthlight', which is mapping software to collating geographic information and this will be transferred to business as usual.

Significantly the project has been able to identify gaps in current service and is developing an understanding how these gaps can be addressed to enable Older Adults to have greater choice and access to meaningful community activities:

- Home Based Support. There is a lack of options to refer older adults to who are limited in their ability to leave their homes, either due to physical disability or cognitive impairment. They function within their home with an appropriate level of support but report low mood, loneliness and social isolation due to these limitations.
- Enhanced Personal Assistant market to respond the Social Needs of Older Adults. Service users in receipt of Personal Budgets which includes Social Isolation need support to understand what their options are and the PAs need to be skilled in how they can assist and motivate clients.

- **Transport +.** Transport options do not provide the level of support needed for older adults to access the wider community resources. Chaperoned transport to community activities is required to bridge the gap between the Older Adult and the community group.
- **Collaborative approach to providing groups.** Older Adults that want to attend groups but are limited by need to have accessible facilities. Community Groups could come together in one Community location with accessible facilities and PA support.
- **Bringing People Together.** Supporting Older Adults with similar interests to connect. A coordinator who can enable peer support groups to be established. An example of this has been support we have given to ex-servicemen and women to come together through SSAFA (The Armed Forces Charity), who are establishing a lunch club to meet this need.

The project will continue to work with clients until November 2016 and a report of the project's findings will be produced, with further recommendations.

'School for Scammers'

Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) funding was used to create and deliver a bespoke interactive performance programme for community groups, to raise awareness of fraudulent activities that might affect them. In consultation with the Safer Neighbourhood Board, **School for Scammers** - a humorous and thought-provoking one-hour Forum Theatre and multi-media programme for adult/young adult audiences.

The programme opens with a performance of the **School for Scammers** short play to ice-break the session. After the initial scripted scenario is played out, the audience participates in a Forum Theatre workshop to decide which direction the characters should take, leading to the outcome of the drama.

This is followed by a specially devised quiz session using the Qwizdom™ interactive learning system (where appropriate) to assess how much information about the issues the audience has understood and absorbed.

This second tour of **School for Scammers**, was delivered from January through to April 2016. There was a diverse range of audiences and a new selection of Havering community groups. However primarily the focus was those aged 50+ as can be seen below.

Date	Group	Audience	Participants
Friday 22 nd January 2016	Elm Park Community Association: Over 50s Coffee Morning	Ladies aged 50+	20
Monday 25 th January 2016	Mardyke Community Association / Centre: Orchard Village 40+ Club	Mixed Aged 65+	13
Thursday 11 th February	Salvation Army: Friendship Group	Mixed Aged 60+	145
Wednesday 17 th February 2016 PM	Romford Synagogue, Luncheon Club	Mixed Aged 50+	35
Wednesday 17 th February 2016 Evening	Hornchurch Bowls Club: Hornchurch Harmonies Women's Institute	Ladies Mixed Ages	40
Thursday 21 st April 2016	Yew Tree Resource Centre: Havering Self Directed Support Group (SDS)	Mixed Aged 50+	10
Tuesday 26 th April 2016 PM	Emerson Park Community Hall: Hindu Cultural Society of Havering	Mixed Elders	35
Tuesday 26 th April 2016 EVE	HOPWA House: 3H Club	Mixed adults with learning difficulties	40
TOTAL 8 Performances			338

A bid for five further sessions has been and the Safer Neighbourhood Board are awaiting approval.

Tapestry Befriending in Sheltered Housing Complexes

The Council has been working with Tapestry to deliver a Befriending Scheme for residents in Sheltered Housing. A survey undertaken in 2014 showed that 45% of the 400 people questioned felt isolated on account of poor health, limited social contact and restricted mobility.

The scheme was launched in November 2015 to help people feel less isolated and promote confidence, independence and access to health services. Within five months had engaged 129 residents in a variety of opportunities including telephone befriending and group activities.

The project is currently under review to identify what improvements can be made in the future.

Visbuzz

London Borough of Havering are one of five boroughs awarded a grant by London Councils to trial 'Visbuzz'. Visbuzz is a simple video calling tablet, that enables Older Adults to securely contact their family members to make a video call.

The Visbuzz user sees a picture frame containing photographs of the people they have chosen to keep in touch with. A single touch of a photograph is all that's needed to connect them immediately for a face-to-face video call, or to accept an incoming call. If it's not convenient to talk, there is a simple messaging system. No unauthorised callers can use Visbuzz. Friends or relatives can video call the Visbuzz User from just about any tablet, smartphone, laptop or PC connected to the internet.

The Visbuzz Project will be issuing 90 Tablets with MIFI (internet access) to Older Adults in receipt of Adult Social Care and living in the community. The project will run for 1 year and there is no charge for the Older Adults for this period.

Disabled Go

Provides a list of locations at a 1,000 venues in Havering which sets out access options which can assist people getting out and about.

Free Swimming for Over 50's

The scheme is still flourishing and user statistics for all pools across the Borough showed that 937 people over the age of 50 had benefitted from the free swimming arrangements in the year March 2015-April 2016, including 13 over the age of 80.

Havering Over 50's Forum

I have attended meetings of the Havering Over 50's Forum regularly and participated in some of the social activities that the group hosts as well. The Forum regularly has around 100 attendees.

The Havering Over 50's Forum invites speakers to attend meetings. There is a wide and varied programme and this year, speakers included representatives from the Essex Wildlife Trust, Havering Museum, Rainham Hall, Healthwatch, Open Locksmith, the Deputy Chief Pharmacist and "Disabled Go". The Forum is very active and well supported and plays an important role in the Borough. Attendees cascade their knowledge to other groups of which they are members so knowledge and information is shared.

“Techy Teas”

Upminster Library started hosting monthly “Techy Teas” in December 2015. The sessions have grown from 5 attending in December to an average of 34 per month.

The majority of people who attend are over 50, although the sessions are not exclusively for this age range.

The sessions are run by a mixture of CAB and Library volunteers who share their IT skills with those who may be struggling to use their laptop, Smart Phone or Tablet. Customers are invited to “drop in” with their device and their problem and they will receive one to one support from a volunteer. While they are waiting, they are able to have a cup of tea and a chat.

The feedback from customers has been really positive with many returning when they encounter another problem.

Visits to Groups in the Borough

There are several active groups in the Borough which I have visited over the past year.

- **CAMEO (Come and Meet each other)** meets in Collier Row Church Hall for tea, conversation and board games. They would like to be able to join in with the Havering Over 50’s Forum, but as transport links between this part of the Borough and the Town Hall are limited, many of the people in the area find it difficult to attend.
- **Circle of Friends** that meet regularly in HOPWA House
- **Di’s Diamonds** – a very active group with a membership of over 400 that enjoy visits to art galleries and exhibitions, meals out, bowling and trips to sites of local interest, such as Upminster Chapel.
- **Cranham Baptist Church** – also provides opportunities for older people in the Borough to meet regularly.

Individual Cases

I feel that one of the most important parts of my role as Champion for the Over 50’s is to take on individual cases. This year, I have done a considerable amount of work with Housing Services to achieve practical solutions for re-charging and storing mobility scooters in Cottons Court. Residents encountered serious problems with the existing design of the storage utility that posed physical risk and caused damage to scooters from lack of heating and condensation. As a result, I am pleased to report that the current garden area is being adapted to provide a new storage space and

the lessons learned from this case will be used to inform future building design. Residents have been fully involved in developing the solution. Housing officers have been particularly helpful with this.

I have also undertaken to liaise with the Council on complaints in Care Homes.

The other significant issue to emerge during the course of the year is Council communication with the over 50's. An example of this has been the renewal of green waste bins, which is now only accessible online. Many of the people affected by these changes are less mobile and do not have ready access to IT. The switch to online renewals was made without consultation and with no alternative provision for renewal. Consequently, a significant number have felt marginalised by the change and I do feel that we have a duty to take the needs of this group into account when making future modifications to the service. Following a Council debate on 8th June, this matter is now being addressed and alternative methods being developed to provide options for those without computer access.

Councillor Linda Van den Hende