

# Enfield Borough Over 50s Forum

## Annual Report

**For the year ending 31st March 2020**

**This report is to be presented at the Forum's annual general meeting as a Zoom webinar on Tuesday 24 November 2020. The meeting was due to be held in June 2020 at Enfield Civic Centre but was delayed because of the Covid-19 virus. The report was sent out to all members with an email address in May 2020.**

# Enfield Over 50s

*“Helping our members keep active, involved and healthy”*



## **President Monty Meth, MBE**

### **Executive Committee/Trustees 2019/20**

<b>Chair</b>	<b>Christine Whetstone</b>	<b>Social Events Team</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Tony Watts</b>	<b>Irene Richards</b>
<b>Vice Chairs</b>	<b>Peter Smith</b>	<b>Roy Barrows</b>
	<b>John Ball</b>	<b>Cheryl Byamukama</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Champaklal Mistry</b>	<b>Heather Cole</b>
<b>Social Secretary</b>	<b>Irene Richards</b>	<b>Olivia Goodfellow</b>
<b>Health Team Lead</b>	<b>Vivien Giladi</b>	<b>Jean Mittins</b>
<b>Members:</b>	<b>Mobin Ahmed</b>	<b>Jan Oliver</b>
	<b>Walter Bowry</b>	<b>Jacky Pearce</b>
	<b>Jim Cattle</b>	<b>Sue Scott</b>
	<b>Chris Chinnery</b>	<b>Graham Thomas</b>
	<b>Gail Hawksworth</b>	
	<b>Yvonne Mulder</b>	
	<b>Chris Osborne</b>	
	<b>George Rufai</b>	
	<b>Joan Stephenson</b>	
	<b>Talat Shaikh</b>	
		<b>Finance Committee</b>
<b>Newsletter editor</b>	<b>Yvonne Mulder</b>	<b>John Ball</b>
<b>Newsletter editorial team</b>	<b>Monty Meth</b>	<b>Champaklal Mistry</b>
	<b>Tony Watts</b>	<b>Tony Watts</b>
<b>200 Club organiser</b>	<b>Jim Cattle</b>	
<b>Office Staff</b>	<b>Ruth Fathaddine, Development &amp; Office Manager</b>	
	<b>Diane Barron, Administrative Assistant</b>	
	<b>Jan Oliver, Development &amp; Office Manager (retired Nov 2019)</b>	

### **Representation on external organisations**

#### **John Ball:**

Chair, Outer North London Companions Friendship centre

Vice-Chair, Greater London Forum for Older People

#### **Walter Bowry:**

Trustee, Enfield Voluntary Action

#### **Vivien Giladi:**

Enfield Health & Well-Being Board

Enfield's Health Improvement Partnership

North Central London NCL Watch

Health Campaigns Together

Meridian Water Health Impact Assessment group

#### **Gail Hawksworth:**

Vice Chair of Enfield Saheli

#### **Monty Meth:**

Chair, Oakwood Medical Centre

Patients Committee

#### **Champaklal Mistry:**

Trustee Director and Treasurer of North London Asian Care

#### **Irene Richards:**

Enfield Older Peoples Board

Enfield Safeguarding Adults Board (ESAB)

Chair Service User, Carer and Patients subgroup of ESAB

Chair of Community Awareness Group (ESAB & Enfield Safeguarding Children Arrangements)

Quality Checkers

Dignity in Care Panel

Chair, PPG Abernethy House

Trustee, Edmonton United Charities

#### **Joan Stephenson:**

Forest Road Group Patients Participation Group

Bounces Road Neighbourhood Watch

#### **Talat Shaikh:**

MCEC Trustee and chair.

EREC Trustee and vice chair.

Committee member Faith Forum for London

Member Enfield Faith Forum

Muslim Faith rep London Resilience Group.

Member LBE Strategic Partnership.

Member Brunswick Park Medical centre PPG

Director and Trustee of North London Asian Care

#### **Peter Smith:**

Enfield Transport Users Group.

ASLEF representative and Executive Member on the NPC London Region.

Patient Representative Forum (PRF) and Public Led Assessment of Care Environment (PLACE) at the North Middlesex University Hospital. Heathwatch Public Involvement Association

#### **Tony Watts:**

Enfield Strategic Partnership Board

Enfield Older Peoples Board (Vice Chair)

Enfield Leisure & Culture Board

AgeUK National Policy Sounding Board

#### **Christine Whetstone:**

Amnesty International Speaker

Amnesty International Project Member

Enfield Youth Offending Unit Volunteer

Police Community Monitoring Group

Police Independent Advisory Group

## Chair's Report



**A**s I write this we have been in lockdown for a month. I am one of the lucky ones in that I have a small garden and can go out to exercise but my thoughts are with those for whom this period has meant isolation or, particularly for

many families, being cooped up in a small space together with all the frustrations which arise.

One positive outcome is that at least some of our members have been able to get together either by 'phone or by email and I am deeply grateful for the camaraderie of my fellow Writing Group members as we have shared our experiences, good and bad, but have also brought good cheer to one another. Thank You.

I should also like to thank the organisers of other Forum groups. We have the Book Club, Coffee Club, Poetry Group, Walking Group and the Millfield Wednesday Drop In. The lottery is a great fundraiser (**have you joined?**) and a new venture is the Bingo Group which has proved to be very popular. **If you have any ideas about setting up a new group please let us know.**

The Forum Focus newsletter is going strong and I am told that the first page many members turn to is the jokes section! I would like to thank the volunteers who get together to ensure that the newsletter is sent out and, of course, to Yvonne, our editor, **who is always interested to get feedback and ideas for articles from readers.**

In addition to serious articles and jokes the newsletter gives details of all Forum meetings and we do hope that you enjoy these. Attendance has been pretty good this year and we are always seeking interesting speakers. **Do you know of a speaker? Have you heard an interesting talk? Let us know.**

In the newsletter you will also find details of the wide range of outings and events organised by our terrific Social Events Team. They would welcome offers from members to organise an event or outing – how about it? **Just one.**

As you all know in the autumn there was a great change in our organisation. Jan Oliver, who had been our Development Manager for over 7 years, retired. I know that you will all want to join me in thanking Jan for her commitment, enthusiasm, hard work, good ideas – the list goes on.... Seriously Jan we all wish you a very happy, well deserved retirement.

We were delighted to be able to appoint Ruth Fathaddine to the post of Office and Development Manager. Ruth joined us just in time to be faced with organising the Winter Fair. Fortunately Jan had left lots of information, Diane was on hand to assist and a few members of the Executive Committee helped out. However, Ruth was unfazed (or seemed to be!) and the Winter Fair was a great success with the most amazing feedback. Many thanks to Ruth, Diane and all the energetic volunteers without whom none of this would be possible. Of course this applies equally to our Falls Day in June, organised by Jan, which was very well attended and enjoyed by all. Sadly we will not be able to hold the planned Falls Day this June but watch this space – we will be organising another event when it is safe to do so.

It would be impossible to run many of our activities, especially the BIG EVENTS without the support of Forum Volunteers. We thank you all for your energy and commitment. **It is hard work but fun to be a volunteer – so how about joining the team?**

The Forum Executive Committee (all volunteers) meets monthly in order to plan ahead. We receive regular reports from fellow committee members, many of whom have enormous expertise in a number of areas. Some members represent the Forum both locally and pan London and some are part of the Forum's essential group of volunteers. You will also be aware that we are involved in a number of campaigns and have sought the support of local MPs.

We are one of the largest organisations representing older people in the UK but we will never take this for granted. We hope that those of you who get involved in Forum activities have a positive experience and, dare I say it, a bit of fun. However, we strive to raise important issues, both locally and in Parliament, giving older people a voice.

**You will have noticed that I have highlighted ways in which you can help the Forum to flourish** and I would like to finish by thanking all the organisations, such as Fusion, who have supported the Forum. We would all like to thank those groups and individuals who have made donations to the Forum.

As always I would like to thank you, our members, for your friendship during the last year and I look forward to meeting many of you in the future.

*Christine*

## Campaigning

**F**airer Funding for Enfield — for public health services, our local NHS hospitals, our 47 primary care GP surgeries, schools and our council's wide range of essential services — has been a consistent and priority campaigning issue for our Forum down the years.

Five years ago, we launched a cross-party petition which secured the support of 10,000 fellow citizens. This past year we launched the Enfield Declaration for Fairer Funding, endorsed by some 60 local community leaders.

Our decision to focus particular attention on the scandal of low funding for Public Health Enfield has been more than vindicated since the coronavirus outbreak hit the borough in March 2020. Few people will have known until now that Public Health England was the public body responsible for monitoring and controlling infectious diseases, such as the coronavirus.

Yet both Public Health England and its offshoot here in Enfield have been the victims of cuts in government grants year by year since 2013, when responsibility for public health was transferred to local authorities under the widely discredited 2012 Health & Social Care Act.

Nationwide, the per head government grant allocation for public health has declined 23.5% since 2014 — and Enfield's share has been so reduced that we decided to confront the responsible Ministers.

More than 100 Forum members and supporters each sent a personal letter to the then Minister for Public Health, Seema Kennedy, questioning why Enfield's allocation was so far below the London per head average.

Joan Ryan, the then Member of Parliament for Enfield North, followed this up by securing a televised Westminster Hall debate, attended by a strong Forum deputation, but which failed to produce a satisfactory Ministerial reply from a badly briefed Ms Kennedy, who is no longer a Minister or an MP.

Subsequently, a new Minister for Public Health, Jo Churchill MP, was appointed in July 2019. Ms Ryan again wrote to her pressing Enfield's case which drew an interesting reply. Ms Churchill says the government wanted to see "local government funding to be decided in a fair, robust and evidenced-based way, reflecting the most up-to-date evidence of councils' relative needs." Indeed, that is all we ask and intend to pursue during the coming year.

Following the December 2019 General Election, and the Cabinet reshuffle in February 2020, Bambos Charalambous, the Member of Parliament for Enfield Southgate, sent our case for fairer funding to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretaries of State for Health and Social Care; Housing, Communities and Local Government; the Chief Secretary of the Treasury and to the chief executive of NHS England.

The subsequent Covid-19 'lockdown' and the accompanying social guidance instructions preventing gatherings of more than two people, has delayed us pursuing this matter. But we place on record in this Annual Report our case for fairer funding together with our thanks to the signatories representing key community leaders in Enfield. It is our intention to resume the campaign once normal life resumes.

**Meanwhile, this is the case we presented to Ministers:**

### The Enfield Declaration for Fairer Funding

**We** prominent and proud citizens living or working in the vibrant and diverse communities in the London Borough of Enfield, wish to draw the attention of the Prime Minister, the Secretaries of State for Health & Social Care and for Housing, Communities & Local Government, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury and the Chief Executive of NHS England to the grossly unfair and continuous under-funding of our Borough by successive governments and their statutory services.

**We do so following the frank government admission that the Public Health funding baseline used by Ministers is "historic" and has been unchanged since 2013.**

**Since it does not take absolute levels of need into account and updated evidence — based data is excluded, it means that Enfield is perpetually under-funded and persistent, but remediable, health inequalities, between us and our linked North Central London boroughs continue.**

**For example: Compared with our £48 per head for Enfield's growing population, the average public health grant for 2019/ 20 across all London boroughs is £73 per head, despite Ministers in 2015 telling Enfield MPs that we were then 13.6% under-funded.**

**Why has Enfield's public health grant been cut by £446,000 this year to £48 per head, while Islington receives £104 per head, Camden £99, Haringey, on our doorstep, gets £70 and Kensington & Chelsea £130?**

**From 2020, the long-awaited spending review will hopefully reflect government policy — as communicated by Ministers in the present government to the Enfield Over 50s Forum — that local authority funding will in future "be decided in a fair, robust and evidence-based way, reflecting the most up-to-date evidence on council's relative needs and resources."**

**Having been subject to spending cuts since 2010 of some £180 million, our council services face pressures as never before.**

**So now is the time to make our voices heard. We are declaring loud and clear that Enfield needs a fair funding deal from government.**

**Community leaders from across the Borough of Enfield have come together to support the above Declaration for Fairer Funding, initiated by our Forum. It is a multi-faith, cross-party and non-party call for help to the Government and NHS England from people in the 9th most deprived borough in London. Baroness Tyler of Enfield, Chair of the Enfield Poverty and Inequality Commission (EPIC) heads the list of the signatories held on the Forum's website.**



## EPIC Report

The final report of the independent Enfield Poverty and Inequality Commission (**EPIC**) was issued in December 2019. Forum President, Monty Meth was one of the 11 members of the Commission, chaired by Baroness Tyler of Enfield.

Their report made many recommendations to Enfield Council aimed at helping to close the big inequality gap and improve the life chances of the many people living on low incomes in the borough.

Our contribution encouraged the Commission to signal the wide differences in healthy life expectancy between families living in the East and West of the Borough. In particular, we secured the Commission's support for the opening of a new multi-purpose integrated health and wellbeing centre on the site of the North Middlesex Hospital.

Unfortunately, and like so many other projects, the coronavirus pandemic has put this on the temporary back burner. But the Forum had secured the support of the NHS Enfield Clinical Commissioning Group for the plan before the CCG was absorbed into the massive health authority covering the five boroughs forming the North Central London CCG.

The new health centre we envisage would reduce the pressure on the A&E department at the North Middlesex Hospital. It would provide a wide range of services to the all too many deprived families in the East of the Borough.

The new integrated health centre would also include a GP surgery, specialists in mental health, advisers on diet, smoking, exercising, sexual health. It would offer an MoT to all age groups from teenagers to the elderly.

The centre will, we hope, provide the leadership and guidance to penetrate and reduce the shocking life expectancy record whereby women living in the Edmonton Green ward, for example, live for the last 28 years of their lives in poor health.

Properly staffed and adequately financed this new type multi-functional health centre could be the vehicle to break down the barriers to equalising life expectancy in Enfield, which have been talked about for years, but achieved too little.

## Fusion Lifestyle

The closure of all Fusion leisure centres in the borough since the March 23rd lockdown has prevented us collecting attendance figures on the successful drives we make encouraging the Over 50s population to take advantage of the magnificent facilities offered, together with the substantial discounts we have negotiated for Forum members.

However, we can report that additional fitness classes have been introduced at the Albany and Southbury centres, including chair yoga and the new soca-dance routine. There is also a new cardio-dance workout that helps to tune the main muscles of the body.

There is no doubt that when we return to normality the Forum and Fusion will have a job to do in getting people back into being active - swimming, using the gym,



**Walking football**

attending the many classes - after a long period in self-isolation.

Fusion was all ready to launch a new 30 and 60 minute free walks programme from the leisure centres and linked to the Over 50s days when coronavirus intervened.

But they are ready to go with a great band of volunteer helpers when normal business resumes.

We wish to place on record our thanks to Dominic Hall and Gareth Heard for their continued cooperation with the Forum and in particular for their sponsoring a second annual Fun(d) Day in October at the Southbury centre which raised £785 for the Forum.



**Walking netball**

## Advice Service

More than 500 people attended our confidential Monday morning advice sessions at the Dugdale Centre - a Forum initiative open to all residents in the Borough who prefer receiving personal face-to-face advice rather than trying to get answers on the phone or on-line.

More than 4,000 people have come to see our team of advisers since the project opened in 2011 and we expect the economic fall-out from the coronavirus outbreak to increase the demand for help during the coming year.

We have been very fortunate that our Forum volunteers, Kathleen Young and Rita Clayton, have been supervising this vital service for the best part of the last eight years, meeting and welcoming all enquirers.

We also record our thanks to Suzanne March for her volunteer work on the reception desk, which was compelled to close before the financial year ended and will not open for at least two months into the 2020/21 financial year.

Unfortunately, the funding crisis affecting all sections of the voluntary sector threatens to affect the continued attendance of Gillian McNally, from Citizens Advice. Although Gillian saw no less than 277 people at the Dugdale Centre between April 2019 and early March 2020, we have been told her services may have to be withdrawn later in the year.

Just how important this advice service is can be judged by the 142 people who asked to see a solicitor and the 89 people seeking tax and financial advice. We also offered help on screening for hearing tests, opportunities to chat to the police and a pre-winter energy saving check.

Our advice service is largely utilised by older, vulnerable people many of them living alone. They know they can get free, confidential help from people they can trust, and it will be a great pity if, at a time of increased hardship following the coronavirus pandemic, we have to withdraw the service for lack of funding.

## Fuel Poverty

Concerned by the consistent number of excess winter deaths among older people in Enfield as a result of cold-related illnesses, the Forum has for many years co-operated with the charity National Energy Action, seeking to ensure homes are safe and warm and energy efficient.

With more than 15,600 households in the borough classified as being in fuel poverty, with family income too low to afford to both heat and eat; the Forum this year teamed up in October 2019 with HEET (Home Energy Efficiency Training) a non-profit charity.

The coronavirus lockdown has prevented us collecting final figures of their work in the borough. but we know that by the end of December they had visited 17 households saving them an estimated £6737 a year.

The savings were based on reduced energy usage and on income improvements, usually through switching to a cheaper energy and/or water tariff, but also informing people of eligibility for the Warm Home Discount or benefits entitlement.

HEET also calculated a total carbon saving (based on reduced energy consumption) of some 7557 kg a year. They also carried out a range of work including:

- heating repairs for two households
- draught proofing 14 doors and 13 windows
- fitting radiator reflector panels to 33 radiators
- advising 12 households of cheaper energy tariffs
- supplying 91 low energy bulbs.

A HEET adviser also saw 27 people at our Dugdale Advice Service, 32 people at the Fusion Fun(d) day in October and dozens at our Winter Fair in February and we hope they will return for the coming pre-winter months.

## Forum Support

For some years the Forum has encouraged Over 50s groups based at the Dugdale Centre or the various leisure centres to form their own social networks, with their own organisation and leadership. We have encouraged them to affiliate to the Forum, so that we benefit from each other's activities.

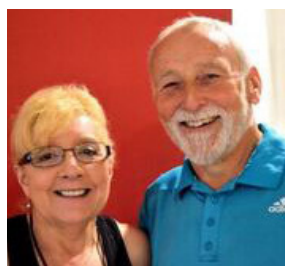
In this financial year the Forum is pleased to report that the Knit & Natter group led by Liz Gilbert has donated a magnificent £2,200 to the Forum. The Group has some 60 members meeting on either Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday morning - or both - and they have their own lunch and birthday events.



**Liz and the Knit & Natter Group**

Centre, led by Anna Long and Roger Biss has donated £500 to the Forum. They were taking 100 people to a now postponed five-day holiday to Bournemouth in April, which hopefully will take place in September.

Some 250 Forum members attended social events organised once again by Jacky Pearce which yielded £552 for the Forum's funds. The events included the



**Roger Biss and Anna Long**

annual Christmas lunch bringing together 116 members - at which Jan Oliver was presented with life membership of the Forum in appreciation of her seven years' sterling work as office and development manager.

We thank too Deborah McBeal, deputy chief operating officer and the Enfield NHS Clinical



**Jacky Pearce at the Christmas Lunch**



**A packed audience at the Winter Fair held at Enfield County School for Girls**

Commissioning Group for financially sponsoring our successful Winter Fair and Falls Prevention Days, attended by some 500 people.

The financial help we have received from Michael Stennett and George Ttoui has been both welcomed and appreciated for helping to sustain the heavy cost of producing and posting our Newsletter six times a year.

## Health Issues

This has been a momentous year; it began with worrying signs on the horizon of a decline in the accessibility of our local health services, with indications of a tightening of the rationing regimes being introduced for hips and knees, among other things, and no improvement in Enfield's now chronic shortage of GPs, the basic building block of our NHS, and it ends with the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown at the time of writing.

The withdrawal of blood testing at 13 surgeries by the Royal Free Hospital (RFH) which was noted in last year's annual report has not been resolved, though several of us dutifully attended a series of workshops at the invitation of the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to provide factual detail of the serious consequences for some categories of patient and practical suggestions on ways forward. Our thanks to the North Midd for continuing to service its stable of GP practices and for maintaining open and positive communications with us and for the heroic work it is currently facing up to.

The biggest issue and cause for concern, until the pandemic, has been the enforced merger by NHS England (NHSE) of Enfield CCG with the four other North Central London (NCL) boroughs: Barnet, Camden, Islington, Haringey and last, and almost certainly least as it is the weakest health economy in NCL, Enfield.

Our council acceded to this without any consultation, in the expressed hope that some of Camden and Islington's resources would come our way. So far that hope has proved vain. NHS England ruled against consultation with the patients and the public with no resistance from Enfield CCG and this the first time since Community Health Councils were established in 1974, precisely to give patients and the public a voice in the NHS, that we have been deprived of the opportunity to influence local decision makers or hold them to account. Thus nearly 50 years of active public involvement and support for the NHS has been swept aside.

Certainly, some of RFH's patients are coming our way to use the new orthopaedic facilities at Chase Farm. Undaunted, the Forum is fighting to improve the over-challenging journey many must make as the RFH failed to co-ordinate its business plan with Transport for London (TfL).



The overall effect of the NCL merger of CCGs is a grave loss of any apparent possibility of local, democratic involvement in the management and roll-out of primary care and its articulation with secondary care, and this exclusion of the public, which cuts off any contribution we can make for co-design with the service, is a retrograde step. England is being divided into 44 footprints ours, NCL, has over 1.4m residents and we no longer have open pathways to providers. There will be 3 lay representatives on the NCL board, but they have been appointed with no public input and will be paid, they are not elected to represent us. Until this March 2020, we have been a constant presence at Enfield CCG's public meetings where our president, Monty Meth, submitted testing questions. We have been able to apply pressure and get answers. How we can do this with the far bigger and inaccessible 5 borough organisation remains to be fought for.

We are told that there will be an Enfield Partnership Board on which those with responsibility for the NHS in Enfield will sit in partnership with the Council. The Forum wants NCL policy decisions devolved down to facilitate local delivery of services but, so far, we have no information about who will sit on this board or how we can access its deliberations and decisions and nor do we know if the Health & Well Being Board, (on which one of the Forum's executive sits), will continue to exist or be absorbed into an NCL-wide group. To date we have not seen the constitution of this new board nor do we know its proposed membership and we intend to insist on transparency and that the public is represented and given the chance to hold it to account.

Interest by Forum members in the profile and functioning of Enfield's health services from GP practices and hospitals and mental health provision to social care and community provision has been high, and pre-dates the pandemic. The Forum has held regular meetings of its health group made up of those attending their surgery's Patient Participation Group (PPG), helping us build a borough-wide picture of what is happening and where problems are concentrated. We have been greatly assisted in this by Defend Enfield NHS providing secretarial back-up, and publicity as well as active support and information.

In addition, Medicus, an experimental partnership of 14 surgeries, has been willing to ask the Forum for its views. As a result of this, and the feedback we get from the many other groups we run and our general membership, as a grass roots organisation we are unparalleled in the spread of our understanding of health issues and have been an asset to providers who have often sought our views, so we have been disappointed that the CCG has not established the promised Patient Reference Group but enquiries about that must, obviously, wait until we emerge from this stage of the Covid19 world-wide pandemic.

Another development this year has been the introduction of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) in a move that could help to offset the shortage of GPs, give registered patients wider choice, share support staff and other resources and support single-handed practices. At the time of writing, PCNs have yet to get off the ground.

Since there have been few face to face GP appointments, no routine referrals to hospital and necessary diversion of resources to contain the spread of the ferociously clever C19, as well as the need to maintain distances, primary care has adapted to an even more stringent situation than

normal and we must hope that when we emerge from this scourge, there will be greater investment in emphasising the importance of the work of our General Practitioners and of training new GPs as well as far greater investment in hospital and the NHS and Public Health. Public Health budgets and power have been systematically slashed over the last ten years depleting our national ability for rapid local response to this pandemic. This self-defeating policy must be reversed.

Earlier in the year we lost, to the sad death before his time, John Wardell, who led Enfield CCG and was always very responsive to and highly regarded by your Forum. He is greatly missed.

At the time of writing we are weeks into lockdown and talk is turning to a lifting of restrictions. Many of our readers will be in vulnerable categories and we hope you have stayed well and safe. Over-early relaxation risks a further surge and we have yet to count the cost in lives lost in the community and in care homes which Enfield has a significant number of.

The Forum takes its lead from public health experts at London's Imperial College:

- Find cases in the community as well as in hospitals and care homes, isolate them, trace their contacts using local PH teams and digital tools
- Track the epidemic so we know the hotspots needing special attention
- Build community resilience by providing local support for the most vulnerable and those most badly impacted by the control measures
- Suppress transmission using testing, distances and hygiene and effective protective equipment
- Investigate differential effects on men, minority ethnic groups and other at-risk groups emerging as the crisis unfolds
- Ensure that the most vulnerable have simple access to a basic income to which the Forum would add food.

We shall continue to keep you informed and to do our best to represent your interests in our pursuit of a healthy older age for all.

Stay safe, keep your distances and keep well.

## Social Events and Holidays

The Forum has seen some changes in the last 12 months on the social scene.

After many years leading the social committee, Irene Richards stepped down and we have been determined to keep things as organized as she did! Our small team has renamed itself the SET-Social Events Team, and have shared out the jobs, which is working really well.

The equally long-standing development and office manager Jan Oliver has retired from her paid role but luckily for us, jumped straight into the social side as a volunteer - aren't we lucky? We also welcome Chrissy Kontourou, who has already arranged a well-supported trip to Bulgaria as her first event.

The team has offered the members of the Forum another varied and stimulating selection of social opportunities, including Music hall, meals out supporting local restaurants both lunches and dinners, free walks in our amazing City, day trips to Coventry, Maidstone, Whitstable, Suffolk, Hammam experience, river cruises, exhibitions, mystery



**Group holidaying in Sicily**

the first time and those on their own.

Regular book club and coffee club meetings give some continuity to the social programme and a new regular lunch club will follow shortly in the same fashion.

The SET are a dedicated group and are always looking for new and challenging destinations to keep the membership happy. We are already planning for the coming year and beyond, so please keep supporting our efforts as it gives us feedback that we are getting it right!



**Members trip to Brick Lane Music Hall**

As a result of small charges, raffle takings and holiday discounts, the SET have been able to donate £1,315 to Forum funds in the last year.

The forum is so lucky to have such a dedicated and enthusiastic SET and so that we can continue to increase our offerings, come and join us, even for one event per year, every little helps.



**Day trip to Canterbury and the boat ride on the Stour**

## Fundraising Report

The Over 50s Forum 200 Club started in August 2015 and is run by Jim Cantle. Since the inception of the lottery we have paid out over £11,000 to the 55 winners and we have raised nearly £7,000 for the Forum, money which helps towards the costs of production and distribution of the newsletter. We would like to thank all those who have contributed over the years. The cost is £5.00 per month and can be paid by standing order or cheque or cash for 3 months, 6 months or a year. As many of you may know Jim is partially sighted and we would like to thank his wife Lynne and member Alvin Meisuria for their invaluable help with



**Jim Cantle with 200 club winner Edith Ashley**

trip, open air theatre, holidays to Sicily, Canada, Jordan and many, many more offerings too numerous to mention. We aim to cater for all ages, incomes and aspirations, so will never hold back from pushing the boundaries at this very special time of life. The social events are never a closed shop and all members are welcome, particularly those joining in for

record keeping. If anybody is able to help with fund raising there are other potential projects, so if you have any new ideas please contact Jim on 0208 363 4969.

In October 2019 we started a Bingo Club which usually meets once a week on a Monday afternoon at Malone & Co. in Enfield Town. This has raised nearly £600 for the Forum and has provided an enjoyable social afternoon for a regular group of members. Full details about the club can be obtained from Jim.

## Forum Focus

Our newsletter Forum Focus is produced every two months, highlighting issues of importance to our members and the wider community in Enfield. It also lists the Forum Meetings, the excellent range of activities organised by our Social Events Team, as well as the activities of Forum Groups and of those groups affiliated to the Forum.

We also have regular contributions from the local police and Enfield's Public Health team, and we give updates from Fusion, which runs the council's leisure centres and with whom we have negotiated excellent discounts for members.

With a 7,500 print run, Forum Focus is posted to all members and distributed to all affiliates, libraries, leisure centres and to some GP surgeries. It remains a key weapon in our campaigning endeavours on a range of issues, including the consistent under funding by government of services in Enfield (our Fairer Funding campaign) and, more recently, the call for better bus services to Chase Farm Hospital, especially for those attending the new orthopaedic surgery centre there.

The production of the newsletter is overseen by our volunteer editor Yvonne Mulder along with our President Monty Meth and Secretary Tony Watts. The distribution is organised by Peter Smith, with a great group of volunteer 'stuffers' who make sure all the newsletters are put into the envelopes (already labelled and franked by other volunteers in the office).

The new design for the newsletter we introduced last year has been well-received and it has helped us attract new advertisers. Forum Focus is the most important tool we have in making our presence felt and our views known to MPs, councillors and the various statutory bodies that govern us. It helps us to retain a strong membership and a voice in the community, particularly as what remains of the local commercial press has reduced its coverage of the borough.

# ForumFocus

August / September 2019

ENFIELD BOROUGH OVER 50s FORUM NEWSLETTER

**Public Health fight goes on**

A group of Forum members attended a debate where the Minister of Public Health tried to explain Enfield's unfair funding

Seema Kennedy MP, the Minister for Public Health, was compelled to attend a televised parliamentary debate on 16 July – where she failed to answer questions posed by Enfield MPs and dozens of Enfield residents on why this borough's public health allocation is underfunded year after year.

Regular readers of this newsletter are well aware of the Forum's campaign to increase the level of Enfield's Public Health Allocation (PHA). Not only do we receive just £47 per head compared with the London average of £73 per head, that sum has gone down by £2 a head since last year.

More than 120 people sent letters to Seema in response to the request we made in the last newsletter – so thanks to all of you. However, we all received a reply that was a standard letter from civil servants which contained lots of incomprehensible phrases and no real answers.

So Joan Ryan, MP for Enfield North, managed to get a debate in Westminster Hall, attended also by Barbara Chakrabarti, MP for Enfield Southgate, and a group of Forum members, where Seema Kennedy was called on to explain this PHA inequality.

Joan asked three main questions:

- 1) Can the Minister commit to, at the very least, reinstating the £480,000 which has been cut this year?
- 2) Can she announce an increase so that Enfield funding at least matches the average London level each year?
- 3) Can she ensure that Enfield Public Health spending is put on a sustainable footing?

She emphasized that PHA cuts are a false economy as it results in higher costs to the health service overall. This is especially evident in Enfield where we have high levels of youth violence, obesity and some of the most deprived and poverty-stricken wards in the country.

Seema Kennedy explained that the lower level of Enfield funding is the result of a funding formula that was set in 2013

when the responsibility for Public Health was moved from the Government to local councils. The amount was based on the NHS funding at the time.

She says the funding formula is under review and admits that it should be "more needs-based than on NHS historical funding".

But she could not give Joan any of the three guarantees she asked for: Barbara emphasized that the growing and changing population in Enfield has hugely increased the need for Public Health funding and that the current funding formula is not delivering results that are adequate or fair.

Monty Meth, Forum President, said the Minister seemed only to be able to say that there was nothing she could do until the funding formula review was complete next year, though she does admit that the formula does not take into account the changing needs in Enfield.

"We need to keep up the pressure inequality and that it needs to be rectified".

The average Public Health grant across all London boroughs is £73 per head. Enfield's Public Health grant is just £47 per head while Islington receives £103, Camden receives £100, Haringey gets £69 per head and Kensington & Chelsea £130.

To read the full text, search Public Health Funding Enfield on [parliament.hansard.com](http://parliament.hansard.com) and to keep up the pressure write to Seema at the House of Commons.

**Forum Meetings**

For information about Forum meetings, groups, social activities and information sessions, see pp 14-16.

Also see p5 for Forum Fun(d) raiser Day!

[www.enfieldover50sforum.org.uk](http://www.enfieldover50sforum.org.uk)



## Forum Website Redevelopment

Over the past few months, Yvonne Mulder and Chris Chinnery have created and launched our new website. One key requirement was for the site to be pleasant to use on smartphones, iPads etc, and to work with screen reading software.



*The banner of our new website*

The way the old site was constructed meant that a change of style was almost impossible without starting from scratch and any adjustments relied on arcane and obsolescent software that required its own expertise.

The new site, like 35% of all the websites in the world, is based on the open source WordPress platform. This job of adding to or changing the site's content or even its appearance no longer requires technical expertise.

Our aim is to turn <https://enfieldover50sforum.org.uk> into the most up to date window into the activities of the Forum, particularly for the ever increasing number of silver surfers who are swelling our ranks. Already the site has a search facility so that users can readily find the information they are looking for; annual reports and newsletters, joining and renewal forms - these in future will enable online applications, renewals and payments.

## Office and Development Report

We were saddened when Jan Oliver retired in November after several years of exemplary service to our members. She has been a hard act to follow but we have been fortunate to recruit Ruth Fathaddine who has settled well into the role of managing the office and supporting members. Her first major task was to organise the Winter Fair which due to her efforts and our volunteer was an outstanding success.

With almost 6000 members maintaining our data base, ensuring that our records are in order, producing and sending our eNews. Over two thirds of our members have email addresses and this facility allows us to send out regular updates on events and happenings which affect our age group. It also lets us help our affiliate organisations by informing this wider audience of their activities.



*Jan Oliver with the Forum life membership award presented by our president, Monty Meth*

In managing the office Ruth is of course ably assisted by Diane Barron. We continue to recruit other volunteers to help us process subscriptions, label and prepare envelopes for posting out of our newsletters together with our regular team of 'Stuffers'. We thank them on behalf of all our members.

## Universal Credit Project

The Forum-initiated two year project funded by the Council came to an end during the year. The project which provided support to over 50s claimants with limited IT skills was very successful and its success has led to it being funded for a further two years.

Over a dozen Forum members have regularly given up their time to help applicants from the job centres to manipulate the considerable IT hoops necessary in order to receive benefits while they continue to seek work. As a result of this project our team of 10 Forum volunteers has since successfully run 750 individual sessions and by so doing helped 180 clients to prepare CVs and manage the hurdles imposed by UCS. Of the clients seen a significant number have since found acceptable positions. The project team was fortunate to be under the direction of Williamz Omope, a full-time job club advisor. Our thanks again to our volunteers who have and continue to support claimants.



*Williamz Omope, the project co-ordinator*

For the future Enfield Voluntary Action is the purse holder for the project and managing the project in cooperation with the Forum.

## Finance

The good news is that our finances were on target for the year. Our contingency fund remains at the same £50,000 needed in the event that the Forum had to cease operating. As you will see from Appendix 2 the Forum is in good health financially and will endeavour to remain so for the foreseeable future. Thanks to the efforts of our office staff and volunteers who processed £47,489 in subscriptions income. As many members have signed a gift-aid statement we will be able to reclaim some £8,800 during the new financial year. Additional income from advertising in the newsletter, our bingo and 200 clubs plus some welcome contributions from our Knit & Natter Group, the Southbury Fun Group and Social Events Team meant that we ended the year with a £4,027 surplus. This surplus will help us weather the inevitable impact of the coronavirus lockdown.

Our thanks are also due to Stennett & Stennett and George Ttoulli for not only sponsoring the Forum but also providing free advice to members at our weekly Dugdale surgeries.

For the future our Finance Committee is considering the options for simplifying payments of subscriptions by either direct debits or via credit card payments. Members can already make payments by online banking or by standing orders. That our finances remain in such good order is due the excellent bookkeeping and diligence of our Treasurer.

# Meetings Programme

During the year the Forum held meetings covering a variety of topics including:

- Regular drop-in sessions
- Enfield Council's Connections Service
- Short stories from the Over 50s Forum writing group
- Improving Public Health – Why Communities Matter
- History and Memories of the Schools at Chase Farm
- National Pensioners Convention campaigns
- Getting older in London and the U3A
- Homes and homelessness in the Borough of Enfield
- Key strategic transport issues facing in the Borough
- Common scams and how to avoid becoming a victim
- How Age UK wins campaigns and influences people
- Aditya Chakraborty of The Guardian talked about his researches for his book on Edmonton

- The issues of care in old age including housing options, legal and financial issues and more
- The 2020/21 Council Budget and the £18m savings that need to be made
- The Extinction Rebellion and the need to get Government to act to save the environment
- The quality of social care in Enfield
- Focussing on mental illness

In addition to these formal presentations a number of IT Drop-in sessions were held whereby members having problems with their computers, tablets, software and iphones were able to attend and in most cases get on the spot solutions and advice.

The Forum thanks all those who gave these presentations for their time for this valuable support.

## APPENDIX I

### Organisations Affiliated to the Forum

Adoramus Choir & Orchestra  
 Association of Ingleborough Residents  
 BHP Bowls, Tennis and Social Club  
 Bounces Rd Area Neighbourhood Watch  
 Bramley Ladies Bowling Club  
 Cockfosters Probus Club  
 Deep Indian 50 Plus Assoc - Enfield  
 Elizabeth Lodge Care Home  
 Enfield & District Veteran Vehicle Society  
 Enfield & Southgate Workers Educational Association  
 Enfield Arts Circle  
 Enfield Camera Club  
 Enfield Carers Centre  
 Enfield Caribbean Association  
 Enfield Chamber Orchestra  
 Enfield Choral Society  
 Enfield Community Singers  
 Enfield Croquet Club  
 Enfield Light Operatic & Dramatic Society  
 Enfield National Trust Association  
 Enfield NHS Retirement Fellowship  
 Enfield Over 50s Fun Group  
 Enfield Soroptimists  
 Enfield U3A  
 Enfield Unison Retired members Assoc  
 Gardening Friends

Grovelands Bowling Club  
 Heart Throbs Cardiac Support Group  
 Holtwhites Bowls Club  
 Keep Fit - Dance Fit  
 Knit n Knatter Group  
 Macular Society Enfield Support Group  
 Mayfield Athletic Table Tennis Club  
 MCEC (Palmer's Green Mosque)  
 Meet a Need with Christian Care  
 North London Asian Care  
 North London Humanist Group  
 North London Morning Orchestra  
 Oakwood Horticultural Society  
 Probus Club of Enfield  
 Ruth Winston Centre  
 Selborne Bowling Club  
 Southgate Homebound & Disabled Association  
 Stroke Social Club Park Avenue  
 The Arts Society of Enfield  
 The Walkabouts Rambling Group  
 The Winchmore Singers  
 Weir Hall Ratepayers  
 Winchmore Folk Dance Club  
 Winchmore Hill Bowling Club  
 Winchmore String Orchestra

**The Forum thanks our affiliates for their continuing support throughout the year. In return the Forum promotes their activities and programmes in our newsletters, eNews and website. Affiliates can also insert their leaflets in our mail-outs for a nominal cost.**

# APPENDIX 2

## ENFIELD BOROUGH OVER 50S FORUM (Registered Charity number 1122859)

### RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT for the year ended 31st March 2020.

#### RECEIPTS

		2019/20	2018/19
	Note	£	£
Subscriptions	1	47,469	39,834
Grants and donations	2	17,802	19,248
Newsletter advertising	3	12,653	12,326
Gift Aid Tax refund	10	6,085	9,098
200 Club Lottery contribution		2,855	1,315
Bank interest		658	650
	£	87,523	82,471

#### PAYMENTS

Staff salaries and NIC		43,254	45,494
Newsletter Printing		8,882	7,682
Postage and delivery		13,292	12,790
Stationery		3,164	2,961
Telephone		589	608
Office equipments		0	0
Office rent and hall hire		6,367	6,380
Miscellaneous expenses		1,689	1,967
Insurance		549	505
Public Events	8	8,706	7,069
		86,492	85,456

**Surplus (deficit) on ordinary charitable activities**      **1,031**      **-2,985**

#### Activities for members:

Net receipts from trips	7	2,296	2,120
Net receipts from events	7	700	1,809

**Total net receipts for the year**      **4,027**      **944**

## FUNDS

### GENERAL FUND

Balance 1st April 2019	36,452	35,508
Surplus (Deficit) for the year	4,027	944

**Balance 30 March 2019**      **40,479**      **36,452**

#### Represented by Bank balances and cash

Bank Balances - Barclays	26,210	22,792
CAF	12,911	12,965
Interest at Shawbrook	1,308	645
Cash in hand	50	50

**40,479**      **36,452**

### CONTINGENCY RESERVE FUND

Balance 1st April 2019 and 31st March 2020	50,000	50,000
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**Reprented by Fixed deposit at Shawbrook**      **50,000**      **50,000**

#### Notes to the Accounts

**1** Subscriptions - Includes advance payments received for 2019/20 and onwards and from life members.

**2** Grants and donations have been received from Big Lottery - Awards for All London Borough of Enfield Clinical Commissioning Group

**3** Newsletter advertising includes support by Stennett & Stennett George Ttoui - Burlington Wealth Management

**4** Events completed during the year showed a surplus of £700

**5** Trips completed during the year showed a surplus of £1,315

**6** Income received during the year for trips and events for 2018/19 was £2,301 and for 2017/18 was £1,591.

7 Gross	Receipts	Payments	Net
Trips	10,970	8,674	2,296
Events	3,086	2,386	700
	14,056	11,060	2,996

**8** The Forum organised the following events for public benefit:  
Genealogy Group  
Free Public Advice Sessions  
Falls Awareness Day  
Over 80s lunch  
Winter Fair

#### 9 Reserve Policy

In accordance with recommendation from the Charity Commission we have created a Contingency Reserve Fund to provide for 6 months salaries, rents, redundancy, refund part subscription from life members and fees received in advance from members and other expenditure in the event of the Forum closing down.

**10** Gift Aid claims upto 31st March 2019 have been received.

**This statement of Receipts and Payments and Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31st march 2020 was prepared by:**

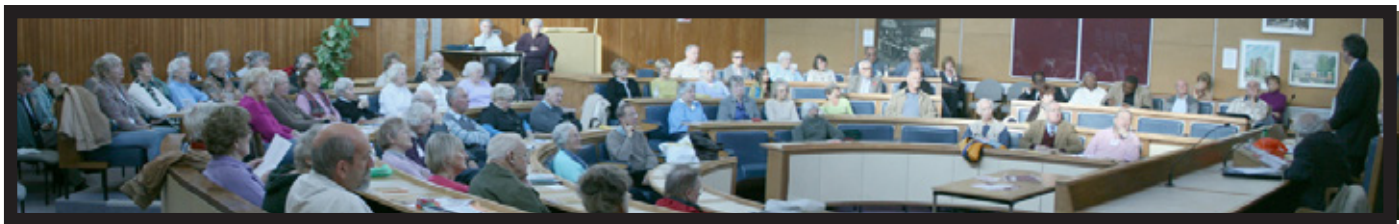
**Champak Mistry, FCCA.**  
**30 April 2020**

**This statement of Receipts and Payments and Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31st march 2020 was Independently Examined by: Heloni Vipani, BSc**

**30 April 2020**



# Enfield Over 50s



## The Value of Forum Volunteers

Retired people provide significant voluntary support for many of the charities and clubs across Enfield and the Forum is fortunate in having a hundred plus members who regularly give up their time to ensure the smooth running of all our activities and to support our office staff.

### Forum Activities include:

Meetings, Conferences, Special events and projects, Drop-ins, Advice sessions, working with Fusion  
Social programmes: Holidays: Trips; Theatre Visits, Lunches, Dinners, Walks.  
Groups: Writing; Readers; Poetry; Woodworking & Handicraft; Knit & Natter Group; Choral; Coffee Club.



*Committee member Gail Hawksworth addresses a specially convened meeting for Forum volunteers at the Dugdale Centre*



*Jan Shortt, General Secretary of the National Pensioners Convention talking to members at the Civic Centre*



*Among the many excellent speakers addressing Forum meetings during the year were – left to right – Aditya Chakraborty of The Guardian newspaper, Joanne McCartney, GLA member for Enfield and Haringey and Frank Bayford, author of 'Memories of Chase Farm'.*