



CHAMPION FOR THE OVER 50's COUNCILLOR PAM LIGHT

ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11

As you will see the Over 50s Champion's report runs to several pages so I will not take up too much of your time by reading it out but I would urge you all to read it if for no other reason than to be able to direct your resident to the services and opportunities available for our senior citizens. As a Borough with approximately a third of our residents in this category we will all benefit from the information. I congratulate our efficient, imaginative and hardworking staff right across the workforce who continually advance services and update opportunities for our older residents. As Over 50s Champion I submit my report and urge this Council to accept it. Thank you.

The Council's investment in Reablement services continues to enable older people to keep their independence. Around 60% of people of using the service now had no care needs after the 6 weeks of intensive and high quality support, this is up from 49% last year. This has enabled 27% more people to remain in their own homes, which is where they tell us they want to be. Funding has been secured to expand the service at Royal Jubilee Court from 13 to 26 flats by converting unwanted bedsits into high quality reablement flats.

The Council in partnership with health has secured additional funding to improve work preventing falls and to improve the experience of those with dementia. An extra £500,000 will be spent over the next two years.

A new Adult Social Care website has been developed and is currently being tested. This will be far more informative and easier to use. This will be launched in the Autumn and will represent a big step forward. The new website will be complemented by a new Advice and Information Shop on the High Street in Romford, near the former Woolworths shop. This will be independently run and will provide high quality advice on everything an older person may want to know, from 'where is my nearest keep fit class?' to 'my neighbour is struggling to cope, who can help?'. The new shop will open at the end of January.

The new and improved Telecare service is supporting more people than ever before. For £6 a week people in Havering can have 3 pieces of telecare, such as fall detectors, extreme temperature detectors or bogus caller prevention devices. Demonstration stands at this week's town show proved popular. The range of products is increasing all the time to give people more choice and improve safety.

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The Carers services in Havering has been praised by the Dept of Health. The Dept of Health provided additional funding to run a Carers Roadshow, reaching out to 'hard to find' carers in Havering. Due to its success this will be repeated in future years.

The Councils Safeguarding service has been up-rated to a 'performing well' standard. This means that the inspector, the Care Quality Commission believe that people are now better protected in Havering.

A new social enterprise launched called People 4 People. This organisation matched older people with suitable care workers called personal assistants. All the personal assistants are police checked, fully trained and referenced. The project won 'Highly Commended' status at the National LGC awards and was highlighted in the Governments new 'Vision for Adult Social Care'. This gives older people more choice.

The number of people who control the funding for their social care continues to rocket. 32% of our customers with social care needs now control the care they receive. They can choose who their carer is, when they come and how the care is delivered.

Work on a new Extra care scheme has begun in Gidea Park on Squirrels Heath Road. This will provide 90 high quality apartments for older people and will ensure they have access to affordable quality care. Extra care is a great alternative to residential care, as its cheaper for the older person and gives them more independence.

Within the Council's Culture & Leisure Services, there are many opportunities for older people. Here are some examples of the range of courses and events that have been available in the past year:

Libraries:-

- 'BBC First Click' sessions recently set up in Havering are aimed at the over 50s who have never accessed computers before – it is a real “starting from scratch” course. 56 people have already attended the sessions, and we have a waiting list for additional sessions. There is a real need for these basic computer sessions in libraries that are not linked to formal education, with no exam to take, no literacy assessments and at a basic level, because many of the existing courses in the borough have requirements or constraints attached to them and attendees are saying that is why they are coming to libraries for the courses.
- Outreach talks. The Reader Development team promote the library service to many groups and organisations by visiting them and giving talks. Among these groups are a high number of Over 50s groups – for instance, retired members groups, Perky Pensioners, and Harold Wood over 60s group.
- Libraries hold a massive number of events and activities (approx. 3,000 per year), ranging from one-off author visits and speakers to ongoing sessions such as Knit and Natter groups, poetry group, creative writing classes and reading groups. These groups have a significant number of over 50s attending them and are very popular. A quarterly events calendar is published and dropped into relevant groups and organisations throughout the borough to continue to promote these opportunities.

Sports & Physical Activity:-

- Havering Health and Sports Development Team delivered an ongoing programme of sport and physical activity for adults, many of which proved popular with those aged 50+, including yoga, dance, armchair exercise, tai chi and healthy walks programme. The team has also worked with partner organisations such as Homes in Havering to provide activities such as chair based exercise for less mobile residents.
- In partnership with Age Concern and Romford YMCA Health and Sports Development delivered targeted 50+ sport and physical activities, including a men's walk, short mat bowls, men's football, armchair exercise and tai chi.
- Havering Health and Sports Development Team organised the 'Life Active' event which took place on 22nd May 2010 at the Queens Theatre, Hornchurch. The event was aimed at adults aged 45-60years old and during the course of the day approximately 80 people attended with 50 taking part in taster sessions including tai chi, yoga and Latin dance.
- Havering Health and Sports Development team were a key partner in the Older Peoples day event held on 1st October at the Queens Theatre. They provided taster sessions and information and advice about sport and physical activity for older people.
- Havering Health and Sports Development delivered 'Just For Him' events in partnership with Age Concern and Romford YMCA. The events helped raise awareness of a healthy lifestyle and offer sport and physical activity and social networking opportunities to men aged 50+.
- The Havering 'Walking the Way to Health' programme offers an excellent way to exercise and a large percentage of walkers are aged 50+. Over 20 volunteer walk leaders lead 6 walks a week, ranging from easy walks of 55 minutes on flat ground to more strenuous two hour walks at venues such as Hainault Forest and Bedfords Park, with over 60 walkers attending the more popular walks on a weekly basis, (the record attendance being 85!). A new programme of 30 minute 'beginner walks' is being established to cater for the older generation and less mobile, and a number of participants are already beginning to move on to the more challenging longer walks.

Arts Development and Fairkytes Arts Centre:-

- Fairkytes Arts Centre continues to provide its year-round programme of programme of projects, activities and events from painting, drawing and pottery to open-air theatre and open days, including hosting a wide variety of activities staged by community and voluntary groups. For the academic year September 2010 to July 2011, adult attendances reached a higher level than ever before – in excess of 70,000 – with approx 60% of all users being from the over-50s age group.
- The Arts Service delivered the annual 60+ Artist of the Year Competition and exhibition, and 60+ Musician of the Year competition, while the Great Havering Short Story Competition includes a section for writers aged 60 and over.
- Langtons Annual Summer Concert and Langtons Winter Chamber Music Season were again very well attended, with the chamber music season in particular

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attracting a total audience of 500 (predominantly from the 50+ age group) to a series of high quality performances by artists of international renown.

- The Queens Theatre continues to develop and programme material with the 50+ age group in mind, with over 45% of its 193,000 attendances in 2010/11 being from this age group

Parks:-

- The Parks Service have installed new 'interpretative signage', covering topics such as local history and ecology, at a number of parks including St Andrews, Lawns Park and Harold Wood Park. They have also delivered a range of walks and talks in parks on local historical and ecological issues, both of which are particularly popular with the over 50s.
- Installation of additional benches and picnic tables to Parks across the borough.
- Installation of new outdoor gyms at Rise Park, St Andrews Park and Lawns Park, which provide a popular intergenerational activity that residents of all ages can enjoy together.
- Improved the safety of parks with the creation of the Parks Protection Team, who are now equipped with rapid response bikes, and carried out improvements to lighting at a number of parks, including Harrow Lodge Park.

The Museum continues to attract many older people to their special events especially their reminiscences of Havering past.

The Over 50s Forum goes from strength to strength with at least 100 members attending the monthly meeting even the AGM where I was honoured to be made Life Time President. Many Council Departments send speakers to update members on current regulations and future opportunities as well as the workings of the Council and how the budget and services are managed on their behalf. Outside Organisations are very willing to send speakers so that members are kept informed of current trends. We have had a number of very entertaining speakers telling us about their very interesting and varied lives. Several outings have been arranged which were well attended including a day at the RSPB site complete with afternoon tea. Future events include an evening event to Southend to see the Lights and a Fish and Chip Supper. We conclude the year with a Christmas Party at the YMCA which will include entertainment by a local older peoples choir.

The Havering Show was a great success with many people visiting the Over 50s stall in the Council's Community Marquee. The Caring Neighbour Scheme is in it's 3rd year and has increased in popularity every year. The finalists will be announced at the celebration at the end of October in the Council Chamber where all entrants will be presented with a certificate.

We work closely with Age Concern Havering who have a speaking spot at every monthly meeting. The new Chief Executive introduced himself on his arrival in Havering and then came back again to explain the reasoning behind staying as Age Concern Havering and not being part of the national charity Age UK. Age Concern is the biggest local charity dedicated to older people working with the Council providing

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services, organising events and outings as well as running clubs for a wide range of interests. They also provide befriending on several levels from visits to phonecalls.

There are many opportunities as well as help for our older residents but we are not complacent and will continue to work with our partners to improve Services and update Leisure, Culture and Educational opportunities