

Pensioners' Forum News

February to
May 2010

Introduction

The snow and the purdah requirements have meant that we have not been able to meet as we would have hoped recently, but now the general election has happened and the summer is here, it is back to business as usual, with our next meeting being on 10 June 2pm – 4pm at the Guildhall.

News from the Forum meeting on 11 February 2010

Waste and Recycling: Proposed Service Improvements

The Forum welcomed Peter Hackett and Brian Moody from Northampton Borough Council Waste Operations to provide an update on the Proposed Service Improvements.

Peter confirmed that they were at the very early stages of the tendering process and 30 companies had expressed an interest in the waste management of the Council. They were working together with Daventry District Council and the questionnaires had been completed and reviewed.

Councillor Garlick confirmed that any bidder would have to be measured against the Council's own service department to see if they can do better and provide the best service that they can.

Their aim was to provide value for money for the people of the town and hoped the process would be completed and implemented by April/May 2011.

The Forum expressed their thanks to the Recycling team at the Council for providing the waste collection in the bad weather and felt that the service provided was getting better and better.

FACTS on NBC Recycling

- All houses in Northampton have two plastic boxes for recycling: a green one for paper and cardboard and a blue one for plastic, cans and foil.
- In addition 65,000 homes have two wheeled bins; one black bin for non-recyclable household waste and one brown bin for garden waste collection.
- The 65,000 properties with wheeled bins also have a black box for glass bottles & jars.
- Before the scheme started we recycled 14% of our waste in Northampton. In 2004/05 we doubled this to 28%. Our government target for 2005/06 was 30%, which we not only met, but exceeded, achieving 36%
- In 2007/08 we recycled 38% - this is a credit to everyone who has participated in the scheme
- If you are unsure of your collection day please do not hesitate to call the Customer Contact Centre on 01604 83 82 81 or by e-mailing recycling@northampton.gov.uk



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Please note that this Forum is supported and funded by Northampton Borough Council.

The Forum may work in partnership and collaboration with other community groups, councils and local services from time to time. The views expressed and decisions taken by the Forum are not necessarily those of Northampton Borough Council.

Change and the Forums

Services the Council provides, including Forums, have to comply with legal and quality requirements. Although this is not something talked about day to day, when the legal requirements change, there needs to be a review of how services are working, to see if they are effective, meeting requirements, and how things can be improved to help everyone.

Some of the legal things to take into account

The Council has a Corporate Plan that sets out overall its priorities for 2010-13. This includes improving how it serves people in relation to equalities. Taking account of the needs of older people comes within this.

The new Equality Act 2010 gives stronger protection to people in relation to their age, disability, gender, and various other characteristics – and to combinations of characteristics eg older women, disabled men. The new law extends the rights of people who care for people with a disability. The way councils will be assessed will include looking at outcomes, what communities say, rather than councils simply using a ‘tick box’ approach.

In April 2009, new law and guidance said councils should look to involve people day to day and give them more ability to inform decisions. Their feedback should also be measurable and monitored.

At the February 2010 meeting, Lindsey Ambrose outlined new legal and quality requirements. These are supportive of having Forums and the Forums’ objectives eg to monitor the Council’s equality practice. She shared some thoughts about how meetings might change to meet the requirements.

The Council has developed equality practice which the Forum has not routinely used “Equality Impact Assessments”: officers consult with people and identify whether and how decisions might have negative impacts on the lives of groups including older people – and how to minimise or remove any possible harm identified. They can then provide Councillors with the Assessment to help them make decisions about changes to policy and how services work.

Representing Older People in Northampton

The Forum is intended to represent the needs of all older people in Northampton – including those who are disabled, from different ethnic backgrounds, different faiths or no faith, different sexualities etc. It needs to be able to show that it makes a difference to their lives through its work.

The 2001 Census figures for Northampton:

- People aged 45 – 59 years: 35,287
- People aged 60 – 64 years: 8,022
- People aged 65 – 74 years: 13,631
- People aged 75-84 years: 9,671
- People aged 85 – 89 years: 2,122
- People aged 90 and over: 1,091

Forum mailing list: 131 people/organisations + 16 GP practices + One Stop Shop + Mental Health + Patient Liaison Service

Forum attendance: around 20 per meeting

Resources and Finance

The Council, like all public sector services, is facing a lot of challenges financially. This means it has to look at all its services (including the team who do the behind the scenes admin for the Forums and also support formal Council meetings). It can’t always do things in all the ways it and the people it serves would prefer. It needs to look to do the best it can with the resources it has – and where appropriate to look at working with others.

Activities including the Forums, Holocaust Memorial Day and Local Democracy Week had a total budget of approximately £3,600 in 2009/10.

In January 2010 Lindsey’s role changed to Community Engagement and Equalities Officer.

Feedback Workshop with Forum Members

This looked at what people feel are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats about current ways of working; what they would like the Forum to do and what they feel it needs to do. The group noted the loss years ago of links into the Council and the chance now for the Forum to change how it works to have more influence and involve more people. The need to make people aware where to take personal issues was noted. The need for two-way dialogue, accountability and meetings was noted.

Updates from the February 2010 meeting:

Appreciative Inquiry on Concessionary Fares: update

Cllro Hollis confirmed that in 2011 the Concessionary Fares would become the responsibility of the County Council. Cllr Hollis said the County Council were renegotiating their contracts with the bus companies and needed Government funding to update the systems.

Reg Deering

Forum members held a minute's silence for Reg Deering who had passed away at the age of 88. A regular member of the Pensioners' Forum, he will be sadly missed.

Updates following the Meeting held in January 2010

John Gardner Memorial

The Chief Executive of NBC had advised that the matter was with Northants County Council. Cllr Hollis said she would update the next meeting.

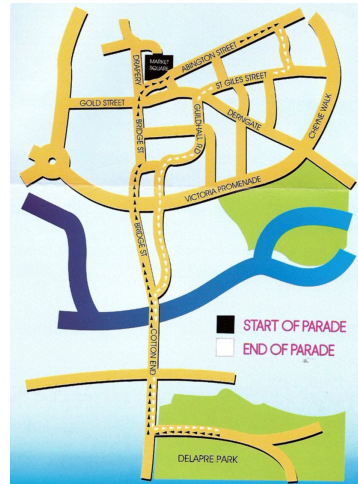
Royal and Derngate Theatres: standby tickets and concessions

Brian Nichols noted an error in the last newsletter re the Royal and Derngate Theatre tickets. He said they should be available for concession holders, not council tax payers.

The Royal and Derngate advise concession prices are available for individual shows where stated. These may be for over 60s. The Box Office can advise when booking. Discounts vary on individual performances. Disabled Patrons who require assistance when visiting the theatre can also request a free ticket for their companion/carer. Concessionary price tickets must be requested at the time of purchase. Concessions do not apply to the lower price seats in the Upper Circle and the Boxes in the Royal auditorium or any restricted view seats. All concessions are subject to availability. Some concessions and ticket prices may only be available for a limited period, subject to demand.

Community Events Coming Up:

Sat 12 June 2010: Northampton Carnival
Delapre Abbey grounds. Roads due to be closed from 1pm in town centre. Route includes www.northamptoncarnival.co.uk



Sat 19 June 2010: Day in the Park
Errington Park, Duston

Wed 23 June 2010 50+ Network

Lings Forum Leisure Centre, Weston Favell

- AGM 3pm in the Dance Studio
- Northampton Roadshow 1pm to 4.15pm.

Northants Festival of Well-Being

A month-long series of events around the county

- **Thurs 10 June 10.30am – 3pm:** World Cafe! Meet other people, share your experiences and ideas about wellness and wellbeing. Venue: Wardington Court, Northampton. Contact: Northants Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust tel: 01604 658987
- **Tues 15 June: Health event 12pm – 3pm,** Alliston Gardens Community Centre, Semilong. healthy eating, advice and have a go at an exercise class, blood sugar tests, blood pressure tests and weight measurements and free fruit smoothies and fruit kebabs. Contact: 01604 601065 or email: agycc@btinternet.com

More at: <http://northantsfestival.blogspot.com/>

Guided Cycle Rides, Age Concern include:

- Tues 22 June 10am Victoria Park Ride
 - Sat 3 July 1pm/2pm Meet Becket's Park
- Jason Williams tel: 01604 629595/07957 353482

Sun 4 July 2010 Family Day, Abington Park
2pm – 5pm by the Bandstand. To include: music, dance, treasure hunt, cultural snacks, games.

Anne Frank Awards 2010 honour older people

Winners of the awards this year include Frank Mills for saving the life of Tom Hanlon by giving him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, then going on to befriend and support him through his recovery. Also Leslie Ingle, nominated by an appreciative lady for her tireless work with elderly people at a local retirement village, including taking them on holidays, and also for her work with young people, especially guides and brownies. The Anne Frank Awards are judged by young people on Northampton Youth Forum. They are due to be presented at Northampton Carnival 2010.


Forum attendance in February 2010 included:

Roger Rumsey (Co-Chair), Cllr Jane Hollis (Co-Chair) Cllr David Garlick (NBC), Brian Moody (NBC Waste Operations), Peter Hackett (NBC Waste Manager), Harry and Hazel Tuttle (Pensioner's Voice), John Wright (Pensioner's Voice), Mary Dyer-Atkins (Pensioner's Voice), Norah Noakes (50+) Sylvia Smith (50+), Madeline Boys (SURF), Geoff Simms, NAB, Liz Percival, Joyce Smith, Mike Hill (Pensioner's Voice), Audrey Taylor (50+), D.J. Hewitt, Laura Taylor (50+), Brian Nichols, Pam Wilton (NCC, 50+ Network), Anne MacKay, Doreen Minney and Jean Anderton.

Have you got news, questions or thoughts you'd like to share?

To pass on information via the Pensioners' Forum please contact Lindsey Ambrose, NBC, The Guildhall, St Giles Square, Northampton NN1 1DE

 email: lambrose@northampton.gov.uk

 01604 837566 or 0779 53 33 687

Volunteering Opportunity: Heritage Open Days:

Welcome Desk and Tour Guides Northampton Guildhall Sat 11 and Sun 12 Sept 2010

Training is due to take place during the summer. If you are interested in volunteering please contact Lindsey Ambrose by 23 July 2010. Contact: (m) 0779 53 33 687 (voicemail) 01604 837566 (email) lambrose@northampton.gov.uk .

Programme of information confirmed so far is at www.northampton.gov.uk/heritageopendays . We hope to have leaflets available by end of July 2010 but cannot print them until we have full listing of participating venues.

Would you like to join the Forum?

Membership is open and free. It enables you to receive information by email or post about meetings, consultations, events etc so you can be actively involved with the Council and dialogue about services.

To join please contact Democratic Services or Lindsey Ambrose. Democratic Services tel: 01604 837101 or 01604 837089 or 01604 837356. Lindsey Ambrose (m) 0779 53 33 687 or (voicemail) 01604 837566 (please allow a few days for your call to be returned if left on voicemail as Lindsey's work takes her away from the office a lot). Email: lambrose@northampton.gov.uk or npepper@northampton.gov.uk

Or, write to us at: NBC, The Guildhall, St Giles Square, Northampton NN1 1DE

Pensioners' Forum meetings coming up in 2010

Open to all. Meetings are Thursdays from 2.00pm to 4.00pm at Northampton Guildhall: 16 Sept 2010, 4 Nov 2010, 16 Dec 2010

Disabled access information: www.northampton.gov.uk/disabledgo or contact the Guildhall Office on 01604 838400 or email: guildhalloffice@northampton.gov.uk

More information about the Forum is at: www.northampton.gov.uk/pensionersforum