



**SPEAK AND BE HEARD**

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**WOLVERHAMPTON OVER 50s FORUM**

Secretary: Mr. Roy Girdler

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**Minutes of Over 50s Forum Wednesday**  
**16<sup>th</sup> January 2008, Civic Centre**

**Apologies:** J. Purshouse

**Present:** 35 members, Rose Powell

**Chairperson:** Brad Purshouse

Brad welcomed Rob Lawton, Bereavement Centre, Richard Lynch, Probate Register Birmingham and Anne Bailey, Head of Commissioning for Older People to the meeting.

**Speaker – Rob Lawton**

Rob presented background information on the services that are available through the Bereavement Centre. Access to these services is free of charge. The Bereavement Centre was set up in the late 1990s in response to work carried out by the Over 50s forum. The service aims are to reduce stress, provide relevant needed information, and sort out various benefits. They also provide help with hospital issues, GPs, death certificates and there is also a telephone service which explains services available, information given by callers is then passed on to the Registrar. There's also help available to fill out forms etc. The Centre also provide a wide range of services i.e. death registration, housing/ financial assessment benefits, burial information, DWP, tax, passport, DVLA issues etc.

There is also an Aftercare Service which includes CRUSE, AWAAZ and Age Concern. They also provide a path finding project which is linked to different departments within the Council. The quarterly Steering Group which is Chaired by Marjorie Wedge provides outcomes and feedback on the service.

The Bereavement Service is likely to amalgamate with Registrar Services in 2008/2009, and they will then share information on services. There is not a will making service but Age Concern can help out in this regard. The Bereavement Registrar can visit (disabled/house-bound) people in their homes if they are unable to come to the centre; there is also a list of people who can register a death in the family. It was stated that Wolverhampton provide an excellent service and it is the only one in the country who provide such outstanding service. Leaflets were distributed during the meeting and more are available from Rose Powell on 555494.

**Speaker - Richard Lynch - Probate Registry**

Richard distributed printed information on Will making issues. He emphasised the importance of making a Will, this allows a deceased person's wishes to be adhered to. he also reminded forum that common law relationships are not recognised without a Will, a solicitor can be used or you can approach Age Concern. A person making a will must be sound in mind at the time of making the Will. When there's no Will probate will step in. A relative or friend should be considered as an executor rather than a solicitor as the latter can prove costly.

A Will should never be altered as this will invalidate it and it should be kept in a safe place, i.e. at the bank, at home or at the solicitors though you will be charged an annual fee for the safe keeping of your Will.

**Speaker - Anne Bailey**

Presented an overview of the Prevention Framework. The aim of this is to help people keep their independence for as long as possible. It also identifies which people would benefit mostly from this service. Anne explained that there are about 75% of older people who are doing reasonably well, 20% who are at risk of losing their independence, as they're unable to live as they wish to, although they might have some family support, and 5% have high care needs.

There are many factors that can contribute to depression and anxiety, such as illness, disability, lack of physical activities, which can cause a downward spiral in a persons mental and emotional well-being. Inability to do daily chores, loss of partner, victim of crime, loss of social life, can also cause a person to become socially isolated. Anne emphasised the benefits of regular exercise, such as walking which can help to reduce physical and mental health problems.

**Minutes of the last Meetings**

**Matters Arising**

**Any Other Business**

Not discussed due to lack of time

**Date of next meeting Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2008 at 10 am**

**Committee Room 3, Civic Centre.**

**Speaker: Martin Sarling – Prime project**